Shōbōgenzō

Eihei Dōgen

Shōbōgenzō

The Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching

A Trainee's Translation of
Great Master Dōgen's Spiritual Masterpiece

Rev. Hubert Nearman, O.B.C.,
translator

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Offered in memory of
Reverend Master Jiyu-Kennett

Acknowledgments

Considering the scope and length of this work and the demands, both monastic and scholarly, that it puts on any translator, a reader may well wonder what could possibly motivate anyone to take on such an enormous task. Whatever may be the motives for other translators, mine has been quite simple. I had finished translating the various texts that were included in *Buddhist Writings on Meditation and Daily Practice* (Shasta Abbey Press, 1994) and asked Rev. Daizui MacPhillamy, my editorial consultant at the time, whether Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett had anything else she wanted me to translate for her. He took my question to her, and, he said, he was dumbfounded when, without a moment's pause, she replied "*The Shōbōgenzō*," for such a monumental undertaking would obviously take me many years to complete, not only because of its length but also because of its reputed obscurity and even incomprehensibility. Simply because she was my Master, I agreed to her request, knowing that I would never have taken on such a task for any other reason. It has been my monastic offering to the Sangha over some fourteen years. During that time I have had the great good fortune to live at Shasta Abbey, a traditional Buddhist monastery where the life that Dōgen extolled is practiced. I wish to express my deep gratitude for all the assistance my fellow monks have given me, and in particular:

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May the merit of this work benefit all beings.

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The *Shōbōgenzō*

A Trainee's Translation of Great Master Dōgen's Spiritual Masterpiece

Translator's General Introduction

The *Shōbōgenzō* is the recognized spiritual masterpiece by the thirteenth-century Japanese Sōtō Zen Master Eihei Dōgen. It is comprised of discourses that he gave to his disciples, in person or in writing, at various times between 1231 and his death twenty-two years later at age fifty-three.† These discourses cover a wide range of topics pertinent to those in monastic life though often also relevant to those training in lay life. He discusses matters of daily behavior and religious ceremonial as well as issues involving the Master-disciple relationship. He also explores the deeper meaning that informs the so-called Zen kōan stories, which often puzzle readers by their seeming illogicality and contrary nature.

I have translated the title as *The Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching*, though a fuller, more comprehensive rendering would be *The Treasure House for What the Spiritual Eye of Wise Discernment Perceives from the Vantage Point of the True Teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha and His Heirs*. The term 'Teaching' in the title is synonymous with the Buddhist use of the term 'Dharma', which refers not only to what the historical Buddha taught to His disciples but also to the Truth that flows from the Unborn and which all things give expression to when they are functioning directly from their innate True Self. However, it does not address what may be a scholar's particular interest in producing a translation, though it is obvious that translating anything from medieval Japanese and Chinese requires special academic training: hence the subtitle "A Trainee's Translation of Great Master Dōgen's Spiritual Masterpiece". That is, it is intended primarily for those who practice Zen Buddhism rather than those whose interest is purely academic.

There are various ways in which Dogen's discourses can be presented, each having its particular advantages. The way I have chosen is simply to divide the discourses into those that were completed before his death and those that were still

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† The present translation is based primarily on Kawamura Kōdō's edition of Dōgen's complete works Dōgen Zenji Zenshū (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1993), in consultation with the editions by Tamaki Kōshirō, Dōgen Shū (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1969), by Ōkubo Dōshū, Kohon Kōtei Shōbōgenzō (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1971), by Terada Tōru and Mizunoya Oko, Dōgen (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1972), and by Masutani Fumio, Gendaigoshaku Shōbōgenzō (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1975).

in draft form when he died, ordered where possible chronologically by the date when the discourse was given.

The discourses were originally written out by hand, primarily by his chief disciple and amanuensis, the Second Japanese Sōtō Zen Ancestor, Kōun Ejō. Most of the discourses have a two-part postscript (printed in italics, usually at the end of a discourse). The first half indicates who the recipients of the discourse were, along with when and where it was presented. If this is signed, it will customarily be by Dōgen. The second half supplies a short account of when and where the copy was made. These copies are most often signed by Ejō, though three were signed by Giun, one of Ejō's Dharma-heirs who later became the fifth abbot of Dōgen's Eihei-ji Monastery.

The majority of the discourses focus on exploring the spiritual significance of some topic drawn from Buddhist Scriptures or Chinese Chan (Zen) texts. Dōgen's commentaries on these texts are not lectures as would be understood in academic circles, but are talks that arise from a Zen Master's deepest understanding of the spiritual meaning and relevance of his topic to Buddhist training and practice. They come out of Dōgen's mind of meditation and are being presented to his monastic and lay disciples, who are presumably listening from their mind of meditation.•

The discourses carry a strong flavor of the conversational and the personal, and he enriches them with colorful Chinese and Zen phrases, as well as with medieval Chinese and Japanese colloquialisms. When translated literally, many of these metaphors and figures of speech may well have little meaning for English-speaking readers. However, by the thirteenth century they would have been a common way for a Buddhist Meditation Master to refer to That which is the True Nature of all beings. The function of these metaphors is, to some extent, to 'ground' a Master's disciples by providing them with a colorful and more easily remembered image instead of some more abstract, 'intellectual' definition. They point to the Great Matter for which one trains in Serene Reflection Meditation, which is to awaken to one's True Nature.•

Dōgen sometimes uses a manner of speaking that closely resembles a dialogue. One specific instance occurs in 'A Discourse on Doing One's Utmost in Practicing the Way of the Buddhas' (*Bendōwa*), his earliest dated text in the *Shōbōgenzō*. The major part of this particular discourse consists of an imaginary dialogue between Dōgen and a potential disciple. While it takes the form of someone asking questions and Dōgen giving answers, it is not a catechism. That is, it is not a series of formal questions and answers. Rather, the questions arise from an attitude of mind which has misgivings about the efficacy and worth of the type

of seated meditation that Dōgen advocates. Dōgen's responses, by contrast, arise from a place that lies beyond the intellective, duality-based mind and are aimed at helping the questioner to recognize that duality and to let go of it. Hence, the attitude of mind of both the questioner and the Master is as important as the specific question being asked. For the translator, one challenge in rendering Dōgen's text is to convey to the reader the attitudes implied in the exchanges between the two.

These interchanges between a Master and a potential or real disciple are not speculative in nature, but invariably have the purpose of helping disciples find that spiritual certainty which is the hallmark of a genuine kenshō, 'the seeing of one's Original Face', that is, the direct experiencing of one's innate Buddha Nature. This is not the same as having an intellectual understanding or intuition, since the experience takes one beyond those functions associated with the so-called rational mind, which are the foundation and authority for those who are not dedicated to spiritual pursuits. Furthermore, the certainty arising from a kenshō is not speculative in nature or the product of rational persuasion or a form of blind faith.

Dōgen's teaching in the *Shōbōgenzō* is neither confined to nor limited by conventional mental categories, which is why practitioners of Dōgen's type of meditation are admonished to be willing to be disturbed by the Truth, that is, to have not only their intellectual preconceptions questioned but also to have their reliance on solely what makes conventional, worldly sense called into question. Despite the view of some that Dōgen is therefore 'anti-intellect', once the spiritual certainty arises in those who are doing the training, the previous need to depend solely on the 'boxes' fabricated by their intellect disappears. Or as several Meditation Masters describe it, once we give up 'the walls and fences' that our intellect constructs from the bits and pieces of experience, this dependency disappears, and we metaphorically 'drop off our body and mind' but without rejecting the intellect itself or denying its natural and useful functions.

Conventions

In the present work, when a common word is used having spiritual significance, I have employed initial capitals to signal to the reader that word *X* is not intended literally but is part of a code which Zen Masters have used to convey spiritual meaning. Indeed, when people spiritually awaken, this is customarily signaled by their expressing their understanding in some unique and personal way. When the use of this code is ignored or overlooked by a translator, a kōan story may well become totally unintelligible and give rise to the erroneous notion that

Zen promotes the indescribable. To avoid this, I have added some footnotes intended to point out places where the code may not have been spotted by readers.

An example of this may occur in a dialogue in which a Master and his disciple use the same words but with a totally different meaning. For example, a Master and his disciple are having a discussion, and the Master tests his disciple's understanding of what his True Nature is by asking, "Do you get It?" with the disciple answering, "No, I don't get it." The Master's question is a spiritual one: "Have you got to the heart of your spiritual question?" to which the disciple's reply reveals that he is still attached to conventional, worldly ways of thinking.

Elements of Style

In the present translations, four stylistic elements are used whose purpose may not be immediately apparent:

First is the capitalizing of words that would not usually be proper nouns, such as 'Original Nature', 'the Self', 'the Truth', 'It', 'One's Original Face'. Such words refer either to one's own Buddha Nature or to That which is the spiritual source of one's Buddha Nature. For instance, there is a difference between the term 'good friend' which refers to a Buddhist who has the ability to teach and train others in Buddhism (usually synonymous with a Zen Master), and the term 'Good Friend', which is another name for one's Buddha Nature.

Second, a word that is underlined is to be understood as emphatic within the context of the particular sentence in which it occurs. Were the text to be read aloud, the underlined word would be given emphasis.

Third, Dōgen sometimes abruptly changes his topic within his talks. Whereas many of these shifts are signaled by some introductory word, such as 'further' and 'also', which appears at the beginning of a new paragraph, in some instances this is not the case. Thus it has seemed advisable to aid the reader by inserting a plum blossom asterisk (⁂) between paragraphs where a sudden shift might otherwise prove disconcerting.

Fourth, single quotation marks are often used in the sense of 'so-called', 'what I (or someone else) would call', or 'the term' or 'the phrase', in addition to their customary use for marking a quote within a quote.

Special Terms

Dōgen often alludes to 'training and practice'. This consistently refers specifically to doing seated meditation, applying 'the mind of meditation' to all one's daily activities, and attempting to live in accord with the Precepts of Mahayana Buddhism, that is, the Precepts as spelled out in Dōgen's *Text for a*

Precepts Master's Giving the Mahayana Precepts (*Kyōjukaimon)* and *The Scripture of Brahma's Net (Bommō Kyō)*. Similarly, references to 'studying' denote training under a Zen Master, and do not signify the undertaking of a scholastic regimen.

To render the Japanese word *tennin* (or *ninden)* I have used the phrase 'ordinary people and those in lofty places'. Some translators render it as 'gods and men'. There is the danger that some readers may therefore assume that it means 'immortals and mortals'. However, in a Buddhist context it refers to those who are in the celestial and human realms among the six Realms of Existence, the four others being those of beasts, those in a hellish state, those who are hungry ghosts, and those who are asuras (heaven stormers). Those in the celestial and human realms are potentially able to hear the name of Buddha and absorb the Dharma, whereas those in the other four are so preoccupied with their suffering that it is exceedingly difficult for them to believe that they can transcend their suffering long enough to hear the Teaching and thereby free themselves from their spiritual obsessions.

Dōgen often uses the terms Mahayana and Hinayana (translated as 'the Greater Course' and 'the Lesser Course'). A widely voiced view is that references in Mahayana writings to those who follow a Lesser Course denote practitioners of the Theravadan Buddhist tradition. The Theravadan tradition, however, was not active in medieval Japan during Dōgen's lifetime. Also, the Pali Canon upon which the Theravadan tradition is grounded was known to Dōgen through Chinese translations and was held in great esteem by him. Allusions in Dōgen's writings to 'those who follow the Lesser Course' are clearly to persons whom trainees may well encounter in their daily life. Thus it is likely that he is referring to shravakas (those who merely seek to gain an intellectual understanding of Buddhism) or to pratyekabuddhas (those who undertake some aspects of Buddhist practice but only for their own personal benefit).

The Issue of Gender and Sex

This issue is sometimes raised in regard to translating medieval Chinese and Japanese texts into English. It involves the attitude of Buddhism in general, and Dōgen in particular, toward women in spiritual life. While it is true that in some cultures during some periods negative social attitudes toward women have unfortunately colored the practice of Buddhism, Dōgen's view is unequivocal: males and females are spiritual and monastic equals, for enlightenment knows no such distinction as sex. The English language, however, has not yet developed a universally accepted way to express what is gender neutral. When Dōgen refers to

monks or laity in general or as 'someone who', it should be understood that he is including both males and females, even though the English pronominal reference is, for brevity's sake, 'he', 'him', or 'his': I have used 'she', 'her', and 'hers' only where the sex of the person is known to be female.

Appendices

Two appendices have been added to the book. The first is a listing of the Japanese names of the major figures in the various kōan stories along with their Chinese equivalents. The second is a glossary of words and idiomatic phrases, such as hossu and kōan, which need some explanation because they do not have an easy equivalent in English.

On Kōan Stories

Dōgen makes wide use of stories from Zen kōan collections. Since these stories may strike some readers as strange or incomprehensible, the following observations may prove helpful.

Originally, the term 'kōan' meant 'a public case', and in Chinese Zen referred to a notable, authenticated instance when a disciple came to realize his or her True Nature. By Dōgen's time, the term 'kōan' had become synonymous with the spiritual question which epitomizes that which keeps disciples, as well as anyone else, from directly experiencing what their Original Nature is. It is the spiritual doubt that keeps someone 'looking down'. The kōan stories, then, are usually accounts of how a particular trainee's doubt was resolved.

In these stories, the spiritual problem of a trainee often involves a habitual acting counter to at least one of the ten major Mahayana Buddhist Precepts on either a literal or a figurative level. That is, in some way the disciple will have persisted in taking the life from someone or something, in taking things that are not given, in giving in to covetous feelings, in saying that which is not so, in trafficking in something that intoxicates or deludes, in putting oneself up and others down, in insulting others, in giving in to anger or resentfulness, in being stingy, or in acting in a disrespectful manner toward Buddha, Dharma, or Sangha.

When reading such dialogues, it is prudent to consider what the mental attitude of the questioner is and not just what is being asked. This is important because the question asked arises from a particular frame of mind. Determining who is asking the question (and sometimes where and when) will help clarify what this frame of mind is and, therefore, what is really being asked, since the answer given will not be an absolute one, independent of the questioner, but one that speaks to the questioner's mental attitude and perspective. This is sometimes

referred to in Zen writings as 'two arrows meeting in mid-air', one meaning of which is that the questioner thinks he knows what the target, or goal, is and has 'shot his arrow' of discriminatory thought at that target only to have his 'arrow' deflected by the Master's response so that, to mix metaphors, the disciple's 'train of discriminatory thought' is derailed. At the same time, the Master's 'arrow' points to a way for the disciple to go in his Buddhist training.

However, in some cases the roles are reversed: the Master asks the disciple a question or 'invites' him to respond from a perspective beyond the discriminatory mind. If the disciple has truly awakened, he will respond appropriately from the mind of meditation and not from the discriminatory mind of duality. In such an instance, the 'two arrows meeting in mid-air' is an expression for their oneness of mind.

The stories may follow any of several different patterns or their combination. Almost all will involve at least one of the following three patterns:

In the first, a disciple will ask the Master a question which arises from a reliance on dualistic thinking to comprehend his own spiritual doubt. This encounter with the Master will often occur in the context of a formal spiritual examination ceremony, but this will not always be made explicit in the text. The Master will then do or say something which cuts through the disciple's confusion and points him directly toward 'seeing' his Original Nature. What the Master does or says arises from a source that transcends the dualistic, intellective mind: it is not a philosophical, doctrinal, or 'rational' answer to the question. If the disciple is 'ripe'—that is, spiritually ready to shift his perspective away from reliance on what his intellect is doing so that he can realize That which transcends intellect—he has an experience referred to by some such phrase as 'realizing the Truth' or 'awakening to his True Nature'. In some kōan stories, the trigger for this experience may not be directly supplied by the Master but by some other external condition, such as seeing peach blossoms or hearing a piece of tile strike bamboo.

In the second, a Meditation Master initiates an exchange with a disciple who is still in doubt, and tries through his conversation with the disciple to steer him toward facing up to what his spiritual problem is. In such dialogues, the Master's questions may seem upon first reading to be casual ones. In kōan stories, when a Master asks a question, he is not trying to engage the disciple in some social interchange: his question will have a deeper purpose or meaning, which the disciple may or may not pick up on. If the disciple fails to 'get it', the Master will usually persist in his questioning until either the disciple has an awakening or until the Master decides that the disciple is still not yet 'ripe' enough.

In the third pattern, a Master-disciple interchange occurs, but with a disciple who has already awakened to the Truth. In such an instance, since what the disciple is saying or doing no longer arises from the mind of duality, there will be some clear indication of the Master's approval.

In those cases where the disciple is still in doubt, one useful clue as to what his spiritual problem is can be found in how the Master addresses the disciple. For instance, in one story, a monk who is given to striving too hard is addressed as 'Shibi the Austere Monk'. In another, a monk who has become entangled in erudition through his academic pursuit of studying Scriptures is addressed by his Master as 'you who are a learned scholar of considerable intelligence'.

In identifying the disciple's spiritual problem, it is helpful to determine what the disciple's attitude of mind is, and not to treat his questions or responses on a purely informational level. Once the disciple's spiritual problem has been identified, how he responds to his Master will reflect that problem until he has an awakening, at which time he may compose a poem which expresses the change in perspective that has emerged.

Another aspect which may be difficult for the reader to fathom immediately is the relevance of the Master's actions in word or deed to what the disciple's problem is. Since such actions are not 'pre-planned' but reflect the on-the-spot skillful means of the Master, it can only be said that whatever is done will arise from the mind of meditation, will be free of any dualistic tendency, will not break any of the Precepts, and will arise out of his compassion for the suffering of the disciple. In one famous kōan story (Nansen's cat), the roles are reversed: Meditation Master Nansen puts himself in a spiritually unsupportable position by trying to teach his monks to keep to the Precepts by seriously breaking one himself, and it is his chief disciple who points this out to him.

Another topic that arises from the kōan stories deals with who the participants are. The Master is easily identified. On the other hand, the one who asks a question is often referred to simply as a monk. In such cases the person is most likely a junior monk, one who has not yet been Transmitted and who is asking his question at a ceremony called shōsan. This is the formal spiritual examination ceremony which is customarily held twice a month in Zen monasteries during which junior trainees ask a question that reflects their present spiritual state.

When the monk asking a question is specifically identified, this refers to a senior monk, one who is already Transmitted or who will be Transmitted. These are monks who will ultimately function as a Master, and often as the founder of a temple or a lineage. Whether in the kōan story they have already been Transmitted or are still juniors can only be determined by the nature of their question.

Applying the Principles

To see how the preceding principles apply to an actual kōan story, the following one, taken from Dōgen's *Bendōwa*, is given with my exegetical remarks in square brackets. The kōan story itself is given in indented text:

> Long ago, there was a monk in Meditation Master Hōgen's monastic community named Gensoku, who was a subordinate under the Temple's administrative director. Master Hōgen asked him, "Director Gensoku, how long have you been in our community?"

[Although Gensoku is not the director, he is apparently acting as though he thought he was, thus breaking a Precept by 'putting himself up'. Hōgen's question is not a casual but a leading one, arising from his compassionate sensitivity to Gensoku's spiritual suffering from pride.]

> Gensoku replied, "Why, I've been in the community for three years now."

[Gensoku tacitly acknowledges recognition of his importance as self-evident and responds in a casual manner. Had he not been absorbed in his pride, he might have responded, as would be expected not only from a novice but also from any Chinese, by some such statement as "You flatter me by addressing me by too exalted a title, considering that I have been training here for only three years now." Had he already had a kenshō, his response, though not predictable, would not be impolite or disrespectful in tone but, on the other hand, would probably not be a conventional, 'socially correct' one either.]

> The Master asked, "As you are still a junior monk, why have you never asked me about the Buddha Dharma?"

[Hōgen gently corrects Gensoku by now pointing out his actual position as a junior monk. He then asks another leading question, which implies that Gensoku thinks that he is above all other novices and does not need instruction.]

Gensoku replied, "I will not lie to Your Reverence. Previously, when I was with Meditation Master Seihō, I fully reached the place of joyful ease in the Buddha Dharma."

[The delusion underlying Gensoku's pride begins to emerge more clearly, for he claims to have attained a spiritual state which he has not yet reached. This is what Hōgen had probably surmised and which had led him to engage Gensoku in this dialogue. Gensoku is now breaking the Precepts by saying that which is not so and by having sold himself the wine of delusion.]

> The Master said, "And what was said that gained you entry to that place?"

[Hōgen now probes directly into the heart of Gensoku's problem.]

Gensoku said, "I once asked Seihō what the True Self of a novice is, and Seihō replied, 'Here comes the Hearth God looking for fire.' "

[The nature of the question and the response suggest that this interchange had occurred as part of a shōsan ceremony (referred to above) held before the assembled monks, during which novices ask a Meditation Master a question which presumably reflects their current spiritual understanding. Because at this point Gensoku is still operating from the mind of duality, it is likely that the question was asked from the intellect rather than from the heart. The significance of Seihō's response will be discussed later.]

Hōgen responded, "Nicely put by Seihō. But I'm afraid you may not have understood it."

[Gensoku had heard Master Seihō's words but had not grasped their import. Hōgen makes a complimentary remark about Seihō's comment. Had Hōgen suspected that Gensoku had already had a kenshō, it is unlikely that he would have done this, but instead might have made some remark that on the surface looked as though he were disparaging Seihō, such as "That old rascal! Is he still going around saying such things?" but which Gensoku would see as being the way a Master may acknowledge another Master whilst avoiding judgmentalism.]

Gensoku said, "A Hearth God is associated with fire, so I understand it to mean that, just as fire is being used to seek for fire, so the True Self is what is used to seek for the True Self."

[Gensoku has worked out an intellectual interpretation of Seihō's remark, and therefore thinks that this type of understanding is what constitutes awakening to one's True Self. Gensoku's error is in thinking that there are two True Selves: the one that seeks and the one that is sought.]

The Master said, "Just as I suspected! You have not understood. Were the Buddha Dharma like that, it is unlikely that It would have continued on, being Transmitted down to the present day."

[The Master now sets Gensoku straight as to where he is spiritually, in order to shake up his proud complacency and break through his deluded view.]

Gensoku was so distressed at this that he left the monastery. While on the road, he thought to himself, "In this country the Master is known as a fine and learned monastic teacher and as a great spiritual leader and guide for five hundred monks. Since he has chided me for having gone wrong, he must undoubtedly have a point." So, he returned to his Master, respectfully bowed in apology, and said, "What is the True Self of a novice?"

[Leaving the monastery when asked to confront one's spiritual problem 'head on' is not an uncommon occurrence in kōan stories. Similarly, the turning about in one's heart by recognizing that it is oneself who may be wrong is a crucial moment in the life of a trainee. Here it marks Gensoku's letting go of his pride, so that he now returns with the appropriate attitude of mind for asking his spiritual question, which now arises from his heart-felt need to know the truth, and without any preconceptions.]

> The Master replied, "Here comes the Hearth God looking for The Fire." Upon hearing these words, Gensoku awoke fully to the Buddha Dharma.

[What a Meditation Master says or does at a formal spiritual examination ceremony in response to a spiritual question is often multilayered in meaning and application. Since it is not intellectually contrived but arises from the Master's spiritual depths, it may in some way speak not only to the questioner but also to others who are present.]

[In Master Seihō's original remark to Gensoku several layers of meaning were occurring simultaneously. On one level, he was inviting Gensoku to give up his attitude of self-importance and 'play' with him; hence, the form in which the response was given: it forms a first line for a couplet and would have been spoken in the equivalent of English doggerel, the translated version read to the rhythmic pattern of *dum-dum-di-dum-dum dum-di-dum-di-dum*. If Gensoku were open enough, he would have come up with a second line, such as 'Burning up his false self upon the funeral pyre'.]

[On another level, Master Seihō was pointing Gensoku toward his spiritual problem. A 'Hearth God' is the title given to the temple boy whose task it is to light the monastery lamps. Thus, Seihō was saying in effect, "You are acting like a temple boy, not like a monk, and are seeking for that which you already have—in your case, the spiritual flame of your training."]

[Hōgen uses the same words and intonation as Seihō did, but context brings out a third level of meaning, which Gensoku now hears, "Here comes the one most innocent of heart whose practice lights the way for all of us, truly seeking That which is the True Light (The Fire)." Gensoku, upon hearing this, realized that this is what he has been truly seeking—not social position or erudition—and awoke to the Truth where the distinction of self and other completely drops away.]

[In the original Chinese text, as given by Dōgen, the words used by Seihō and Hōgen are the same, but the context indicates that there has been a shift in meaning from how Gensoku interpreted these words when spoken by Seihō and what they implied to him when reiterated by Hōgen. To convey that difference in

meaning in English, the two quotes are translated in a slightly, but significantly, different way. In other kōan stories where the same phrase is used in two different contexts, the translation will also attempt to convey the shift in meaning, rather than leave it to the reader to puzzle out from a mere repetition what that shift may be. While footnotes have occasionally been supplied to help readers over such difficult points in a kōan story, the translator has not attempted to supply full explanations of these stories, trusting that the preceding guidelines, plus the footnotes, will be sufficient.]

1

A Discourse on Doing One's Utmost in Practicing the Way of the Buddhas

(Bendōwa)

Translator's Introduction: *Bendōwa*, the earliest dated work in the *Shōbōgenzō*, begins with a long introductory section which places seated meditation *(zazen)* within the context of what has been transmitted through the ages as the practice of Buddhism, as well as giving Dōgen's reasons for writing the present discourse. This is followed by an imaginary dialogue between a disciple and Dōgen as Master, which forms the core of the discourse. While this discourse superficially resembles a catechism in that the disciple asks questions to which Dōgen supplies answers, the nature of the questions and the attitude of the questioner imply that more is transpiring. Essentially, the imaginary disciple, filled with mistrust, raises various objections to the method of serene reflection meditation which Dōgen was engaged in introducing into Japan, and presents concerns that Dōgen's actual disciples were probably encountering from others or might even be holding in their own minds. The obvious expressions of doubt which the questions voice are bypassed by Dōgen, who replies from the mind of meditation, and thereby keeps to the task of clarifying the misunderstanding that lies at the heart of the questioner's doubt. Although Dōgen's writing style in this work, particularly in his introductory section, is clearly literary, he often intersperses this more formal manner of communication with conversational expressions and colorful figures of speech, which lend a compassionate warmth and gentle humor to his discussion.

All Buddhas, without exception, confirm Their having realized the state of enlightenment by demonstrating Their ability to directly Transmit the wondrous Dharma.[1] As embodiments of the Truth, They have employed an unsurpassed, inconceivably marvelous method which functions effortlessly. It is simply this method that Buddhas impart to Buddhas, without deviation or distortion, and Their meditative state of delight in the Truth is its standard and measure. As They take pleasure wherever They go to spiritually aid others while in such a state, They treat this method of Theirs—namely, the practice of seated meditation—as the proper and most straightforward Gate for entering the Way.

People are already abundantly endowed with the Dharma in every part of their being, but until they do the training, It will not emerge. And unless they

1. A reference to the direct, Face-to-Face Transmission between Master and disciple, in contrast to the transmission of Dharma through lectures or Scriptural writings.

personally confirm It for themselves, there is no way for them to realize what It is. But when they give It out to others, It keeps filling their hands to overflowing for, indeed, It makes no distinction between 'for the one' and 'for the many'. When they give voice to It, It flows forth from their mouths like a tide, limitless in Its breadth and depth. All Buddhas continually dwell within this state, with None holding onto any of Their thoughts or perceptions, regardless of whatever may arise, whereas the great mass of sentient beings perpetually make use of what is within this state, but without their being fully awake to any situation.

As I would now explain it, diligently practicing the Way means letting all things be what they are in their Self-nature, as you put your essential oneness into operation by following the road away from discriminatory and dualistic thinking. When you have abandoned that type of thinking and have thus passed beyond its barriers, you will cease to be affected by its explanations, which, like the nodes in bamboo, block free passage, or by its theories, which are as convoluted as the knots in a piece of pine wood.

In my own case, shortly after I gave rise to the intention to seek for the Dharma, I went searching everywhere throughout our country for a knowledgeable spiritual teacher until I chanced to meet Master Myōzen of Kennin-ji Temple. The autumn frosts and the spring blossoms quickly passed each other for nine cycles, as I absorbed from him a bit about the Rinzai tradition. As chief disciple of the Ancestral Master Eisai, Master Myōzen alone was correctly Transmitting the unsurpassed Dharma of the Buddha: among his Japanese contemporaries there was definitely no one who was his equal. I next turned towards the land of the great Sung dynasty to seek out spiritual teachers on both sides of the Ts'ien-t'an River in Chekiang Province and to learn about our tradition as propounded through its Five Gates.[2] Ultimately I encountered Meditation Master Nyojō on Mount Tendō, and the Great Matter* which I had spent my life seeking to understand was resolved with him.

After that, at the beginning of the Chinese Sho-ting era (1228), I returned to my native land with the intention of spreading the Dharma and rescuing sentient beings. It seemed as if I were shouldering a heavy load, so I decided to bide my time until I could vigorously promote the spread of 'letting go of the discriminatory mind'. As a result, I drifted the while like a cloud, finding lodging

2. An allusion to the five Chinese Zen Buddhist traditions in existence at the time. Dōgen will identify them later in this discourse.

* See *Glossary.*

as a floating reed does, ready to learn from the customs and habits of those Clear-minded Ones of the past.

However, it occurred to me that there might be some who, by their very nature, were genuinely seeking to study the Way with no regard for fame and gain, as they tried to treat mindfulness as their prime goal, but perhaps they were unfortunately being led astray by some false teacher so that the correct understanding of the Truth was needlessly being kept from them. As a result, they may have fruitlessly let themselves become stupefied with self-satisfaction, having been too long immersed in the realms of self-delusion. And so, I wondered how the true seed of spiritual wisdom could sprout and grow in them so that they would have the chance to realize the Truth. Though I was still such a poor monk in the Way, since I was now devoted to letting myself drift like a cloud and float like a reed, on what mountain or by what river could they seek me out? Because of my feelings of pity for these persons, I have undertaken here to write down what I saw and learned of the customs and practices in Chinese Zen monasteries, as well as to preserve the Transmission of what my spiritual teacher understood to be the most profound Purpose, and thereby to propagate the true Dharma of Buddhism. I trust that what follows is the genuine inner meaning of this.

As my Master put it, the honored Great Master Shakyamuni, whilst with His assembly on India's Divine Vulture Peak, imparted to Makakashō this Dharma, which Ancestor after Ancestor then correctly Transmitted down to the Venerable Bodhidharma. This Venerable One proceeded on his own to China where he imparted the Dharma to Great Master Eka. This was the first time that the Transmission of the Buddha Dharma had come to the Eastern lands. It ultimately reached the Sixth Chinese Ancestor, Meditation Master Daikan Enō, by being directly Transmitted in this manner. The genuine Dharma of the Buddha then flowed out through the land of the Han, Its main purpose being revealed without entanglement in sectarian or scholastic concerns. In time, the Sixth Ancestor had two spiritual followers: Nangaku Ejō and Seigen Gyōshi. Since they both had the Buddha seal* Transmitted to them, they were, alike, spiritual leaders for human and celestial beings. With the spreading out of those two branches, the Five Instructional Gates opened up. These are, namely, the Hōgen, Igyō, Sōtō, Ummon, and Rinzai traditions. In present-day Sung China, only the Rinzai tradition is widespread throughout the country. Even though these five monastic families differ, they are still the One Seal of the Buddha Mind.

Also, ever since the latter part of the Han dynasty (ca. 3rd century C.E.), all sorts of instructional books were leaving their mark in China; although they pervaded the whole country, which ones were preferable had not yet been

established. After the Ancestral Master Bodhidharma came from the West, he immediately cut off at their roots those tangled vines of verbalized confusion and let the genuine, pure Buddha Dharma spread abroad. I earnestly pray that the same may happen in our country.

As my Master also said, all the Buddhas, as well as all the Ancestors, have kept to the Buddha Dharma as Their dwelling place. One and All have not only sat upright in Their meditative state of delight in the Truth, but They have also put the Precepts into practice, and thus They have taken this combination as the precise and certain way for awakening to the Truth. Those in India and China who have experienced an awakening have likewise conformed to this approach. This is based on Master directly passing on to disciple, in private, this wondrous method, and the latter preserving its genuine inner meaning.

When we speak of the correct Transmission in our tradition, the straightforward Buddha Teaching of direct Transmission is 'the best of the best'. From the very moment when a disciple comes to meet face-to-face with the one who is to be his spiritual friend and knowing teacher, there is no need to have the disciple offer incense, make prostrations, chant the names of the Buddhas, do ascetic practices and penances, or recite Scriptures: the Master just has the disciple do pure meditation until he lets his body and mind drop off.

Even though it may be merely for a moment, when someone, whilst sitting upright in meditation, puts the mark of the Buddha seal upon his three types of volitional actions—namely, those of body, speech and thought—the whole physical universe and everything in it becomes and is the Buddha seal; all of space, throughout, becomes and is enlightenment. As a result, all Buddhas, as embodiments of Truth, experience a compounding of Their delight in the Dharma of Their own Original Nature, and the awesome splendor of Their realization of the Way is refreshed for Them. In addition, all sentient beings everywhere throughout the physical universe—and in whichever of the six worlds* of existence they may be, including the three lower ones—are, in that instant, bright and pure in body and mind, as they confirm the Foundation of their great liberation and reveal their Original Face. At that moment, all things realize what confirmation of the Truth really is. Everything, all together, employs its body as a Buddha does, quickly leaping in one bound beyond the limits of any 'correct' understanding to sit erect like the Lord Buddha beneath His Bodhi tree. In an instant, everything turns the unparalleled Great Wheel of the Dharma as It opens up and gives expression to the profound Wisdom that is of the Ultimate, of the Uncreated.

Moreover, these equally fully-enlightened Ones turn back to the six worlds of existence in order to personally travel the path of giving help in unseen ways.

Consequently, those who sit in meditation will, beyond doubt, drop off body and mind, and cut themselves free from their previous confused and defiling thoughts and opinions in order to personally realize what the innate Dharma of the Buddha is. That is, in each training ground of every Buddha as the embodiment of Truth, the work of Buddhas finds expression and is put into practice down to the smallest detail, as They create for others far and wide the circumstances that help them go beyond the notion of 'being a Buddha', through Their vigorous promotion of the Teaching that one goes on, always becoming Buddha. At this very moment, the lands of the earth with their trees and grasses, as well as the walls and fences with their tiles and stones, are all seen to be performing the work of Buddhas. As a consequence, all who make profitable spiritual use of whatever storms and floods may arise will be receiving guidance and assistance in unseen ways from the profound and inscrutable instructions of Buddhas, and they will give expression to their innate Understanding, which is ever intimate with the Truth.[3] Because persons who accept and make profitable spiritual use of such floods and firestorms all gladly receive from the Buddhas instruction and guidance on their innate Understanding, those who reside with such persons and are spiritually conversant with them, in turn, mutually provide each other with the unbounded, endless virtues of Buddhas and cause the unceasing, wondrous, immeasurable Dharma of Buddhas to roll forth far and wide until It spreads throughout the whole universe, both within and without. However, these persons of whom I speak are not kept in the dark by being wedded to their senses, for they straightaway realize the Truth by not fabricating anything within the hush of their meditation. If, as ordinary people believe, spiritual practice and personal realization are two different sorts of things, then each could be seen and recognized separately from the other. Should someone become all involved with his sensory perceptions and intellectual understanding, he will not be in 'the realm of enlightenment' because the realm of enlightenment is beyond the reach of delusory, discriminatory thinking.

Furthermore, even though, amidst the stillness of meditation, someone experiences—not only subjectively within heart and mind, but also objectively within outer conditions—an 'entering into realization' and a 'going beyond awakening to Truth', because he is in the realm of delight in the Truth, he does not disturb a single dust mote or shatter the aspect of 'oneness with all things'. Simultaneously, the far-reaching works of a Buddha create a Buddha's profound

3. 'Storms and floods' refer to whatever befalls us physically, psychologically, or spiritually which threatens to 'blow us over' or overwhelm us. Yet, as Dōgen comments, even these seemingly negative and destructive occurrences can have spiritual benefits when examined from the mind of meditation.

and wondrous instructions and guidance. At no time does the vegetation or the earth from which it springs—which are the very places that this instructional path reaches—cease to send forth great luminosity as they give expression to the profoundly subtle Dharma. Both 'vegetation' and 'walls' clearly and effectively let the Dharma be known in the world for the sake of all forms of sentient beings, be they of ordinary minds or of awakened ones.[4] All forms of sentient beings, awakened or not, are ever giving expression to It for the sake of 'vegetation' and 'walls'. In the realm where one's own awakening awakens others, from the very moment that you are provided with personal certainty, there is no hanging onto it, and, once your personal certainty begins to function, you must see to it that it never ceases.[5]

This is why even the meditating of just one person at one time harmonizes with, and is at one with, all forms of being, as it tranquilly permeates all times. Thus, within the inexhaustible phenomenal world, across past, present, and future, the meditator does the unending work of instructing and guiding others in the Way of Buddhas. It is the same practice, in no way different for all, just as it is the same realization and personal certifying by all. Not only is it the practice of simply sitting: it is 'striking unbounded space and hearing It reverberate', which is Its continuous, wonderful voice before and after the mallet has struck the bell. But do not limit the matter to this! Everyone has his own Original Face, as well as his own training and practice to do, all of which are beyond the fathoming of human speculations. You must realize that even if all the Buddhas, who are as immeasurable as the sands of the Ganges, were to exercise Their spiritual strengths and attempt to gauge the meditation of a single person by means of Their awakened Buddha Wisdom, They would be unable to reach its boundaries, try as They might to fathom them.

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You have now heard just how great and vast the virtues and spiritual merits of this seated meditation are. However, someone who is befuddled by doubts may

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4. Here, 'vegetation' refers to all things (physical or non-physical) that are organic or growing, and 'walls' to all things that are inorganic or fabricated.

5. The 'personal certainty' of which Dōgen speaks should not be confused with any rigid and intractable 'certitude' that may arise from intellectual speculation, insistence on 'logical necessity', religious dogma, personal delusion, etc. Unlike Dōgen's personal certainty, which arises from direct, honest, and self-less spiritual experience, such rigid 'certitude' is the hallmark of the realm where one's deluded thinking attempts to coerce others into accepting that which is deluded.

ask, "Since there are many gates into the Buddha's Teachings, why bother to do just seated meditation?"

I would point out in response, "Because it is the proper and most straightforward entryway into what the Buddha taught."

He may then ask, "Why is this the one and only proper and straightforward entryway?"

I would then point out, "Undoubtedly, the Venerable Great Master Shakyamuni Transmitted it directly as the most excellent method for realizing the Way, and Those who embody the Truth in the three temporal worlds, alike, have realized, do realize, and will realize the Way by doing seated meditation. Therefore, They pass it on generation after generation as the proper and most straightforward gate to the Dharma. Not only that, the Indian and Chinese Ancestors all realized the Way by doing seated meditation, which is why I have now indicated it to be the proper gate for those in both human and celestial worlds."

He may then ask, "Since this depends on someone's receiving the correct Transmission, or on his inquiring into the evidence left by the Ancestors, truly these are beyond the reach of ordinary people like me. However, reading Scriptures and reciting the names of the Buddhas, by themselves, can certainly be the cause for one's spiritually awakening. I fail to see the point in merely sitting idly and doing nothing, so how can such a method be relied on for achieving a spiritual awakening?"

I would point out, "That you should now regard the deep meditative state of all the Buddhas and the peerless Great Dharma to be a pointless 'sitting idly and doing nothing' makes you one who is slandering the Greater Course.* Your delusion is as profound as one who says, 'There is no water,' whilst he is sinking down in a vast sea. Thankfully, all the Buddhas are already sitting sedately in the meditative state that is the consummate delight in the Truth. Is this not creating vast spiritual merits? Alas, your Eye is not yet open and your mind is still in a stupor, as though you were drunk.

"True, the realm of Buddhas is marvelous and beyond the power of the intellect to comprehend, to say nothing of what one who is lacking in faith and scant in spiritual understanding can grasp! Only the one whose readiness for genuine faith is great is able to easily enter the Way. He whose faith is nil, even though he is given teaching, finds it hard to accept. On the Divine Vulture Peak, there were those whom Shakyamuni said might depart if they so wished whilst He was giving voice to the Dharma. Broadly speaking, if genuine faith arises in your heart, you will need to train and practice, as well as seek out a Master to study

with. Otherwise, this faith of yours will fade away before long and, sad to say, the Dharma from the past will cease to enrich you.

"Furthermore, I am not certain whether you really know what the virtue is in performing such services as reciting Scriptures and chanting the names of the Buddhas. Merely to move your tongue about and let your voice roll forth, thinking that this will have the merit and virtue of the work of a Buddha, is utterly pitiful. Compared to a Buddha's Dharma, it is far afield and will take you ever farther in the wrong direction.

"In addition, 'to open a Scriptural text' means that you clarify for yourself what the Buddha taught as the principles for training and practice in both the 'sudden approach' and the 'gradual approach'.[6] When you do your training and practice as He taught, without doubt it will help you realize spiritual certainty. Compared with the merit of actually realizing enlightenment now, expending mental effort in pondering upon matters is nothing. Foolishly using your mouth to repeatedly chant something thousands upon thousands of times in an attempt to arrive at the Way of Buddhas is like believing you can reach the south by driving your cart northward. It is also like someone trying to put a square peg in a round hole. Someone who reads passages in religious works while remaining in the dark about the path of spiritual training is someone who would pay a visit to a doctor and leave behind what the doctor has prescribed. What is to be gained from that? Keeping sound flowing incessantly from the mouth is like the springtime day-and-night croaking of a frog in a rice paddy: ultimately, this too produces no benefit. How much more does this apply to those who are deeply committed to their delusions and go wandering off after fame and gain. Such things are difficult to abandon since the inclination of such persons towards success and greed goes deep indeed! Since people of this sort existed in the past, it is certainly likely that they exist in the world today, so very sad to say!

"What you must grasp is that when a trainee who has committed both heart and mind to personally confirming the Truth is in accord with a Master in our tradition—that is, with one who has realized the Way and is clear-minded—on how to practice, and has received Transmission of the wonderful Dharma of the Seven Buddhas,* the true meaning and purpose of this Dharma comes forth and will be preserved. This is beyond what Scriptural scholars who study only the words know

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6. The sudden and gradual 'approaches' are not the same as sudden versus gradual enlightenment. The 'sudden approach' is the awakening to Truth through the practice of serene reflection meditation, which is the letting go of everything and sitting in pure faith and trust in the Eternal. With the 'gradual approach', the trainee works to cleanse his karma and clarify matters by application of the Precepts to all his actions.

about. So, quit your doubts and delusions, and do your utmost to practice the Way by doing seated meditation in accordance with a genuine Master's instructions, so that you may realize for yourself the meditative state of all the Buddhas, which is Their delight in the Truth."

He may then ask, "Both the Tendai tradition, which is based on the *Lotus Scripture*, and the Kegon tradition, which is based on the *Avatamsaka Scripture*, as they have been transmitted to our country, are considered to be the fundamental traditions in Mahayana* Buddhism, to say nothing of traditions such as that of Shingon, which was personally transmitted to Kongosatta by the Tathagata Vairochana* and has been passed generation after generation from Master to disciple in an orderly manner. The main thrust of what these traditions talk about is that 'Our very mind is Buddha' and that 'This mind of ours creates Buddhahood', and they set forth the correct perception of the Five Dhyāni Buddhas,[7] which is realized in a single sitting without spending many eons in training. Surely, these should be considered the most sublime of the Buddha's Teachings. So, what is so superior about the training and practice which you are going on about, that you disregard those Teachings in pursuit of your own method alone?"

I would point out, "You should understand that within the Buddha's family there is no arguing over 'superior' or 'inferior' Teachings, and no singling out of some Dharma as being more shallow or profound. You should simply try to recognize the genuine from the false in training and practice. Some, attracted by a natural setting of mountains and water with its plants and flowers, have flowed from there into the Way of Buddhas. Others, whilst gathering up in their hands the soil with its sand and pebbles, have preserved the Buddha seal. How much more are the myriad images which fill the universe surpassed by the far-reaching words of a Buddha—which are all the more rich!—and the turning of the Great Wheel of the Dharma is contained within each single dust mote. This is why a phrase like 'Your very mind is Buddha Itself' is as the moon within water, and why the import of 'Sitting in meditation is itself becoming Buddha' is as a reflection in a mirror. Do not get tangled up or taken in by a clever use of words. In order that you may now push on in your training to realize enlightenment in an instant, I show you the marvelous path which the Buddhas and Ancestors have directly Transmitted, and I do this that you may become a genuine follower of the Way.

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7. The 'Five Dhyāni Buddhas' are the five Great Buddhas of Wisdom, each of whom represents a particular aspect of the Cosmic Buddha. These Buddhas are: Vairochana, the Eternal Buddha; Akshobya, the Immovable Buddha; Ratnasambhava, the Jewel-Born Buddha; Amitabha, the Buddha of Immeasurable Light; and Amoghasiddhi, the Fearless Buddha.

"Furthermore, the Transmitting of the Buddha Dharma must be done by a Master of our tradition whose personal awakening has been certified. Scholars who go about counting up words are not adequate to serve as teachers and guides: they would be like the blind trying to lead the blind. All who are now within our tradition's Gate, where the proper Transmission of the Buddhas and Ancestors is done, esteem and revere the expert guide whose realization of the Way has been attested to, and place their trust in him as an upholder of the Buddha Dharma. Because of this, when non-human beings—both visible and invisible—come to him to take refuge, or when arhats,* though already enjoying the fruits of realizing enlightenment, come to ask him about the Dharma, this Master never fails to give them a helping hand in clarifying what lies at the bottom of their hearts. As this is something unheard of in the gateways offered by other religions, disciples of the Buddha should just study the Buddha Dharma.

"Also, you should keep in mind that even though, from the first, we are in no way lacking in unsurpassed enlightenment and ever have it available to us for our delight and use, we cannot believe this, and so we become habituated to needlessly giving rise to discriminatory thoughts and personal opinions, chasing after these as if they were something real and, stumbling, we sadly fall off the Great Path. By our relying on these thoughts and opinions, many and varied are the illusory 'flowers in the sky' that we create. Do not immerse yourself in or get stuck on pondering over the twelvefold stages of Dependent Origination or the twenty-five types of existence within the worlds of desire, form, and beyond form, or speculating on the Three Vehicles or the Five Vehicles, or on whether Buddha has existence or not. By following thoughts and opinions like these, you will be unable to consider the correct pathway for training in and practicing the Buddha Dharma. Even so, when, at this very moment, in compliance with the Buddha seal, you let go of everything and earnestly sit in meditation, you will go beyond the boundaries set by any concern that you may have had over being deluded or enlightened. Uninvolved with whether the path is mundane or sanctified, you will at once be strolling about in realms beyond ordinary thinking, as you delight in the Great Enlightenment. How can those who are caught in the nets and snares of words possibly be equal to such a one as this?"

He may then ask, "Among the three traditional ways of spiritual learning, there is the study of meditative concentration, and among the six bodhisattvic practices, there is the perfecting of meditation. Because both of these have been studied by all bodhisattvas* from the moment their hearts first opened to a desire to realize enlightenment, they have been part of training and practice for everyone, bright or dull, without exception. This seated meditation that you are now talking

about can possibly be included as one form of them, but what leads you to contend that all the genuine Teachings of the Tathagata are brought together within it?"

I would point out, "This question of yours has come about because this peerless Great Teaching of the Tathagata, which is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching on the One Great Matter for which we train, has been given the name of 'the Zen School'.[8] However, you must realize that this name first arose in China and then spread eastwards; it was unknown in India. It began while Great Master Bodhidharma was spending nine years 'facing the wall' at Shōrin-ji Temple on Mount Sūzan. Neither monks nor laity had yet learned of the Buddha's True Dharma, so they called him the Brahman who makes seated meditation *(zazen)* his main focus. Later, all his descendants over the generations continually devoted themselves to seated meditation. Lay people, baffled when they saw this, did not understand what was actually going on, and spoke of it in general as 'the Zazen (Seated Meditation) School'. Nowadays, the *za* is dropped, and it is referred to simply as 'the Zen School'. But its heart and spirit is made clear through the vast sayings of the Ancestors. It is not something to be compared or grouped with the contemplative concentration or the meditation alluded to in the Six Bodhisattva Practices or the Three Ways of Learning.

"That this Buddha Dharma has been authentically Transmitted from Master to disciple has not been a secret to any generation. Long ago, at the assembly on the Divine Vulture Peak, it was only to the Venerable Makakashō that the Tathagata entrusted this Dharma—which is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching and the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana—as His peerless Great Teaching. As this ceremony was personally witnessed by the host of celestial beings who are at present residing in heavenly worlds, it is not something that one need mistrust. Since Buddha Dharma, in general, is something that the host of celestial beings ever and ever looks after and protects, the merit of their actions has still not died away. Beyond doubt, you should recognize that this practice is the complete and whole Way of the Buddha Dharma: there is nothing to compare it to."

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8. *Zenshū*, rendered here as 'the Zen School', has a significance in Dōgen's text that is not apparent in translation. Rendering *shū* as 'school' may be somewhat misleading if it suggests to the reader something academic or philosophical. On the other hand, to use the term 'sect' might invite associations with Christian sectarianism. In some other places, I have used the word 'tradition' in order to avoid either misunderstanding. However, Dōgen specifically reveals a few sentences further along that he understands the word to be synonymous with *mune*, 'the main point or focus'; that is, *zenshū* refers to those who make *zen* (meditation) the focus of their training, just as those of the *Kegonshū* make the *Kegon Sutra (Avatamsaka Scripture)* the focus of their training.

He may then ask, "Of the four manners of bodily carriage in the Buddha's family—namely, standing, walking, sitting, and reclining—why is it that you lay the full burden of practice merely on sitting, and talk of attaining certainty and entering Buddhahood by promoting meditative contemplation?"

I would point out, "The ways in which all the Buddhas from the ages past, one after the other, trained and practiced, and by which They arrived at certainty and entered Buddhahood, are impossible to know in full detail. If you are asking what the authority for this is, you should understand that what Those in the family of Buddhas made use of is the authority. You need not seek for an authority beyond this. To put it simply, in praise of the practice, Ancestors and Masters have said that seated meditation is the gateway to ease and joy. From this we can surmise that, among the four manners of bodily carriage, it is the easiest and most joyful. And even further, it has not been the way of practice for just one or two Buddhas: this has been the way for all Buddhas and all Ancestors."

He may then ask, "Granted that someone who has not yet clearly understood what Buddha Dharma is may possibly secure certainty by diligently doing seated meditation. But what about those who are already clear as to what the Buddha's True Teaching is? What could they possibly expect from doing seated meditation?"

I would point out, "Since it is said that we should not discuss our dreams in front of those who are befuddled, or uselessly put oars into the hands of a woodcutter,[9] I am disinclined to answer your question directly. Still there is some teaching that I can give you.

"Now then, to think that practice and realization are separate from each other is a non-Buddhist view, or a misunderstanding of the Way. In Buddhism, practice and realization are completely one and the same. Because it is a practice based on being spiritually awake at this very moment, the diligent training which springs forth from our initial resolve to seek the Way is, in itself, the whole of one's innate certainty. For this reason, we teach that you should not hold in mind any

9. Dōgen's first analogy derives from the Chinese saying, "Do not share your dreams with a fool," but has been modified to refer here to discussing experiences which are as yet beyond the questioner's present level of direct understanding. The second analogy makes this more explicit: one does not discuss such matters because it is like giving tools to someone who cannot make use of them. Further, a 'woodcutter' is a Zen term applied to a monk who has not yet had a kenshō (that is, the experiencing of his own Buddha Nature) and is still working on cutting his karmic tendencies off at the roots, whereas 'oars' is an allusion to the tools needed by one who has awakened to his True Nature to help him ferry others to the Other Shore.

expectation of being enlightened as something outside of, or apart from, practice, since this practice directly points you towards your own original, innate certainty.

"Since this certainty is a spiritually awakened one that already exists within the practice, your certainty will know no limits: since the practice already exists within spiritually awakened certainty, your practice will know no beginning. This is why the Tathagata Shakyamuni and the Venerable Makakashō were both governed by Their practice, which was based on being spiritually awake. Great Master Bodhidharma and the exalted Ancestor Daikan Enō, likewise, were 'hauled and tumbled about' by their practice based on being spiritually awake. Such are the signs of one who resides in, and keeps to, the Buddha Dharma.

"A practice that is not separate from being spiritually awake already exists. It is our good fortune to have had this wondrous practice Transmitted to us individually, and to diligently pursue it with the attitude of mind which first awakened in us the desire to seek the Truth is, in itself, to arrive at that original, spiritually awakened state which is our innate, 'uncreated' Foundation. Be aware that the Buddhas and Ancestors repeatedly taught that we must not be slack in our training and practice, so that we do not stain or tarnish our innate enlightenment, which is inseparable from our practice. If you let go of any thought of 'I am doing a marvelous practice,' your innate enlightenment will fill your hands to overflowing. If you purge yourself of any thought of 'being enlightened', this wondrous practice will operate throughout your whole being.

"Further, when I was in the land of the great Sung dynasty, what I saw with my own eyes, in all the Zen monasteries everywhere, was a Meditation Hall with anywhere from five or six hundred to one or two thousand monks peacefully continuing to do seated meditation day and night. When I asked those Masters of our tradition—namely, those who had had the Buddha Mind seal Transmitted to them and were serving as Abbots of these monasteries—what Buddhism is in sum and substance, I was instructed that it was the principle that 'Training and being spiritually awake are not two separate things.' Therefore, not only for the sake of those trainees within the gates of our temple, but also for those who, distinguished by their seeking for the Dharma, yearn for the Truth within the Buddha's Teachings, I have followed the path of the skillful teachers of our tradition. And in accordance with what these Buddhas and Ancestors have taught, I have put forth that one must diligently practice the Way by doing seated meditation. I have done so without distinguishing between those with the attitudes of a novice or of a senior, and without concerning myself with whether those being instructed are ordinary people or saintly ones.

"Surely you have heard what Masters have said: 'It is not that practice and enlightenment do not exist. It is just that they cannot be taken hold of and defiled,' and 'The one who clearly sees what the Way is, is the one who practices the Way.' Understand that you must do your training and practice amidst the realizing of the Way."

He may then ask, "What about those Japanese teachers of earlier generations who spread Scriptural teachings throughout our country? At the time when they crossed over to China during the T'ang dynasty and brought the Dharma back with them, why did they ignore this principle of seated meditation and just pass on Scriptural teachings?"

I would point out, "The reason why those human teachers of the past did not pass on this Teaching was that the time was not yet ripe for It."

He may then ask, "Did the teachers of those earlier times understand this Dharma?"

I would point out, "Had they understood It, they would have communicated It."

He may then respond, "There are some who say:

> Do not grieve over birth and death, since there is an extremely quick method for freeing yourself from them, namely, by understanding the principle that it is the innate nature of one's mind to be ever-abiding, to persist without change. This means that, because this physical body has been born, it will inevitably come to perish, but even so, this innate nature of the mind will never perish. When someone fully comprehends that the innate nature of his mind—which is never swept away by birth and death—is in his body, he sees it to be his true and genuine nature. Thus, his body is but a temporary form, being born here and dying there, ever subject to change, whilst his mind is ever-abiding, so there is no reason to expect it to vary over past, present, and future. To understand the matter in this way is what is meant by being free from birth and death. For the one who understands this principle, his future births and deaths will come to an end, so that when his body expires, he will enter the ocean of real existence. When he flows into this ocean of being, he will undoubtedly possess wonderful virtues, just as all the Buddhas and Tathagatas have done. Even though he may realize this in his present life, he will not be exactly the same as those Holy Ones, since he has a bodily existence which was brought about through deluded actions in past lives. The person who does not yet understand this principle will

> be ever spun about through successive births and deaths. Therefore, we should just make haste and fully comprehend the principle of the innate nature of the mind being ever-abiding and persisting without change. To pass one's life just sitting around idly, what can be gained by that?

Such a statement as this truly corresponds to the Way of all the Buddhas and all the Ancestors, don't you think?"

I would point out, "The view that you have just expressed is in no way Buddhism, but rather the non-Buddhist view of the Shrenikans.[10] This erroneous view of theirs may be stated as follows:

> In our bodies there is a soul-like intelligence. When this intelligence, or intellect, encounters conditions, it makes distinctions between good and bad as well as discriminating right from wrong. It is conscious of what is painful or itches from desire, and is awake to what is hard to bear or easy. All such responses are within the capacity of this intelligence. However, when this body of ours perishes, this soul-like nature sloughs it off and is reborn somewhere else. As a result, even though it appears to perish in the here and now, it will have its rebirth in another place, never perishing, but always abiding unchanged.

"So this erroneous view goes. Be that as it may, your modeling yourself upon this view and regarding it as the Buddha's Teaching is more foolish than clutching onto a roof tile or a pebble in the belief that it is gold or some precious jewel. The shamefulness of such befuddled ignorance and delusion beggars comparison. National Teacher Echū in Great Sung China has strongly warned us about such a view. For you to now equate the wondrous Dharma of all the Buddhas with the mistaken notion that your mind will abide whilst your physical features perish, and to imagine that the very thing which gives rise to the cause of birth and death has freed you from birth and death—is this not being foolish? And how deeply pitiable! Be aware that this is the mistaken view of one who is outside the Way, and do not lend an ear to it.

"Because I now feel even greater pity for you, I cannot leave the matter here, but will try to rescue you from your erroneous view. You should understand that, in

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10. The Shrenikans were a group of non-Buddhists who are thought to have followed the teachings of Shrenika, a contemporary of Shakyamuni Buddha. On occasion, they used terms similar to those in Buddhism, but with different meanings.

Buddhism, we have always spoken not only of body and mind as being inseparable, but also of the nature of something and the form it takes as not being two different things. As this Teaching was likewise well known in both India and China, we dare not deviate from It. Even more, in Buddhist instruction that speaks of what is persistent, all things are said to have persistence without their ever being separated into categories of 'body' and 'mind'.[11] In instruction that talks about cessation, all things are said to be subject to cessation without differentiating whether they are of some particular nature or have some particular form. So why do you risk contradicting the correct principle by saying that the body ceases whilst the mind permanently abides? Not only that, you must fully understand that 'birth and death' is nirvana: there has never been any talk of a nirvana outside of birth and death. Moreover, even though you may erroneously reckon that there is a Buddha Wisdom that is separate from birth and death because you have worked it out that the mind permanently abides apart from the body, this 'mind' of yours—which understands, and works matters out, and perceives things, and knows what they are—is still something that arises and disappears, and is in no way 'ever-abiding'. Surely, this 'mind' of yours is something completely transitory!

"You will see, if you give it a taste, that the principle of the oneness of body and mind is something constantly being talked about in Buddhism. So, how does the mind, on its own, apart from the body, keep from arising and disappearing as this body of yours arises and perishes? Furthermore, were they inseparable at one time and not inseparable at another, then what the Buddha said would, naturally, be false and deceiving.

"In addition, should you suddenly get the notion that eradicating birth and death is what the Dharma is really about, it would lead you to sullying the Precept against despising the Buddha Dharma. Do watch out for this!

"You must also understand that what is spoken of in the Buddha's Teachings as 'the Gate to the Teaching on the vast characteristics common to the nature of all minds' takes in the whole universe, without dividing it into innate natures and their forms or ever referring to things as 'coming into existence' or 'perishing'. Nothing, up to and including realizing enlightenment and nirvana, is excluded from the innate nature of your mind. Each and every thing throughout the whole of the universe is simply 'the One Mind' from which nothing whatsoever is excluded. All

11. Dōgen makes a distinction between the Buddhist concept of persistence and the Shrenikan concept of abiding. With the former, all phenomena, physical and non-physical, arise and continue on ('persist') for an unspecified period before disintegrating and disappearing, whereas with the latter, the mind is thought to remain ('abide') unchanged and unchanging forever.

Gates to the Teaching are equally of this One Mind. To assert that there are no differences whatsoever is the way the Buddhist family understands the nature of Mind. So, within this one all-inclusive Dharma, how can you separate body from mind or split 'birth and death' off from 'nirvana'? You are already a disciple of the Buddha, so do not give ear to the clatter of a lunatic's tongue as he utters views that are off the True Track."

He may then ask, "Do those who devotedly do seated meditation have to stringently observe the Precepts and monastic rules?"

I would point out, "Keeping to the Precepts and leading a pure life are standard customs in the Zen tradition and are the habitual conduct of the Buddhas and Ancestors. However, for those who have not yet formally taken the Precepts, or who have broken them, we cannot say that their seated meditation is without value or merit."

He may then ask, "Surely, someone who is endeavoring to do seated meditation can also do practices like the Shingon mantra chanting or like the Tendai form of introspection, wherein you try to stop thinking evil thoughts and contemplate what Truth is. Right?"

I would point out, "When I was in China, I asked Masters of our tradition about the genuine keys to successful training. None of them said that they had heard of any of our Ancestors to whom the Buddha seal had been properly Transmitted—either in India and China, now or in the past—ever having done practices such as those two. Truly, if you do not make the One Matter for which you train the thing that you focus on, you will never make it to the Unique Wisdom."

He may then ask, "Can this practice be done by men and women in lay life, or is it only suitable for monks?"

I would point out, "The Ancestors have said in their Teaching, 'When it comes to realizing the Buddha Dharma, make no distinction between male and female, or between the exalted and the lowly.' "

He may then ask, "By leaving home life behind, monks are quickly separated from all their various ties so that they have no impediments to diligently practicing seated meditation. But how can those of us involved in the daily pressures of lay life turn to doing training and practice so that we may realize the Way of the Buddhas, which is unconcerned with worldly affairs?"

I would point out, "The Buddhas and Ancestors, out of Their overflowing sympathy, have opened the great, wide Gates of Their compassion. They have done this so that They might help all sentient beings realize the Truth and enter the Way. Who amongst those in the worlds of either the mundane or the saintly could

possibly be excluded from entering? Because of this, should you seek examples from the past up to the present, authenticated instances of it are many indeed.

"For instance, the T'ang Chinese emperors T'ai-tsung and Shun-tsung were deeply involved with myriad matters of state, yet by diligently practicing seated meditation, they succeeded in traversing the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors. The ministers Li and Fang, while councilors, served as right-hand men to their emperor, yet by diligently doing their seated meditation, they also realized the Truth and entered the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors. It simply depends on whether you have the determination or not: it has nothing to do with being a householder or a monk. In addition, those who can deeply discern the difference between what is excellent and what is mediocre will naturally give rise to faith and trust. How much more evident it is that those who regard worldly affairs as an impediment to the Buddha Dharma are only inferring that Buddha Dharma does not exist within the mundane world, and they do so because they have not yet recognized that, within Buddha Dharma, there are no 'worldly ways'.

"More recently, there was a minister in Great Sung China named Councilor Feng. He was a high official who was extremely mature in the Way of the Ancestors. Later, he composed a poem about himself:

When free from official duties,
I am fond of doing my meditation.
Rarely do I ever lie down
or go sleep in my bed.
Though I bear the semblance
of a minister of state,
'The old Buddhist monk' is what they call me
from sea to sea.

This poem is saying that, even though he had a position that left him little free time from his duties, his determination towards the path of the Buddhas was so deep that he realized the Way. With him in mind, we should reflect upon ourselves and see how our present condition looks in the mirror of his former times. In Great Sung China, I never heard it said that present-day rulers and their ministers, gentry and commoners, men and women, had not fixed their hearts on the Way of the Ancestors. Both those in the military and those in civil service were intent on seeking training in meditation and studying the Way. Among those who were intent, many undoubtedly illumined That which is the Foundation of their hearts and minds. This should let you know that worldly duties do not, in and of themselves, impede the Buddha Dharma.

"If the authentic Buddha Dharma spreads throughout a country, all the Buddhas and all the celestial beings will continually offer Their protection and, as a result, the ruler will transform his nation into a peaceful one. Since it is the wise and saintly who bring about peacefulness, the Buddha Dharma becomes ever stronger.

"Furthermore, when the Venerable Shakyamuni was in the world, even those who were perverse in their actions or twisted in their views found the Way. In the assemblies of Ancestors and Masters, both the 'young hunters' and the 'old woodcutters' alike experienced a spiritual awakening.[12] So it is certainly possible for people other than these! Simply seek out the instructive path of a genuine Master."

He may then ask, "If I decide to do this practice, can I realize the Truth even in this present-day world, which is in the final, degenerate stage of the Buddha's Teachings?"

I would point out, "Although those who devote themselves to the study of Scriptures make a big thing out of various terms and aspects, in the genuine Teachings of the Greater Course no distinction is made about a true, a superficial, or a final period of the Dharma, and it is said that everyone will realize the Way if they do the training. Not only that, with this Genuine Dharma that is directly Transmitted, once you have entered the practice and left your 'self' behind, you will likewise enjoy making use of the wondrous treasures within yourself. Whether or not someone has personally realized the Truth is something that those who have done the training will naturally know, just as those who drink water discern whether it is cool or warm."

He may then ask, "There are some who say that, according to the Buddha Dharma, if I fully comprehend the import of 'Our very mind is Buddha,' then, even though I do not chant the Scriptures or physically put the Buddha's Way into practice, I do not lack for Buddha Dharma. Simply knowing that the Buddha Dharma has always existed within me is what the whole of realizing the Way comes down to. Apart from this, there is no need to turn to others to seek anything. So why should I become all involved in diligently practicing seated meditation?"

I would point out, "This statement of yours is hopelessly unreliable. If the

12. The 'young hunters' is an allusion to those new to training who, having given rise to the intention of realizing Buddhahood, are eagerly seeking it. The 'old woodcutters' are those who have been long in training, but who remain preoccupied with cutting the roots of their past karmic tendencies. These two types are hindering themselves from awakening, the former by overzealousness, and the latter by clinging to a notion of "I still have so very far to go in training."

matter were as you have put it, then anyone with a conscious mind could explain the principle of the Buddha Dharma without having to realize anything.

"You must understand that Buddha Dharma is to be investigated without holding onto any notion of 'self' or 'other'. If knowing that 'You yourself are Buddha' were what realization of the Way is, the Venerable Shakyamuni, in the long past, would not have gone to all the trouble He did to try and help others realize the Way.

"Let me take a moment to substantiate this with a wonderful case concerning an ancient one of great virtue:

> Long ago, there was a monk in Meditation Master Hōgen's monastic community named Gensoku who was a subordinate under the Temple's administrative director. Master Hōgen asked him, "Director Gensoku, how long have you been in our community?"
>
> Gensoku replied, "Why, I've been in the community for three years now."
>
> The Master asked, "As you are still a junior monk, why have you never asked me about the Buddha Dharma?"
>
> Gensoku replied, "I will not lie to Your Reverence. Previously, when I was with Meditation Master Seihō, I fully reached the place of joyful ease in the Buddha Dharma."
>
> The Master said, "And what was said that gained you entry to this place?"
>
> Gensoku said, "I once asked Seihō what the True Self of a novice is, and Seihō replied, 'Here comes the Hearth God looking for fire.'" [13]
>
> Hōgen responded, "Nicely put. But I'm afraid you may not have understood it."
>
> Gensoku said, "A Hearth God is associated with fire, so I understand it to mean that, just as fire is being used to seek for fire, so the True Self is what is used to seek for the True Self."
>
> The Master said, "Just as I suspected! You have <u>not</u> understood. If this is what the Buddha Dharma was like, it is unlikely that It would have continued on, being Transmitted down to the present day."

13. The Hearth God was a nickname for the temple boy who attended to lighting the lamps. Temple boys, who ranged in age from seven to fifteen, had not yet taken the Precepts and were not monks. The relevance of this reference is discussed in the Translator's General Introduction.

> Gensoku was so distressed at this that he left the monastery. While on the road, he thought to himself, "In this country, the Master is known as a fine and learned monastic teacher and as a great spiritual leader and guide for five hundred monks. Since he has chided me for having gone wrong, he must undoubtedly have a point." So, he returned to his Master, respectfully bowed in apology, and said, "What is the True Self of a novice?"
>
> The Master replied, "Here comes the Hearth God looking for The Fire." Upon hearing these words, Gensoku awoke fully to the Buddha Dharma.

"It is quite clear from this that an intellectual understanding of 'One's very Self is Buddha' is insufficient grounds for saying that you have understood the Buddha Dharma. If an intellectual understanding of 'One's very Self is Buddha' were what Buddha Dharma is, the Master, based on what had previously been said, would not have had to offer guidance or admonish his disciple in the manner that he did. From the moment you meet a good spiritual friend, undoubtedly you should straightaway inquire into the procedures and principles of training and practice, as well as unswervingly do your utmost to practice seated meditation and keep to the Way, without ever letting your mind be content with any partial understanding. The wonderful technique of the Buddha Dharma will then not prove fruitless."

He may then ask, "I have heard that in India and China in the present day, as well as in the past, there have been those who have awakened to the Way by hearing the sound of bamboo being struck, and others who, upon seeing the color of a flower, have clarified what their mind is, to say nothing of Great Master Shakyamuni who realized the Way upon seeing the morning star, or the Venerable Ananda who, upon the occasion of the debater's flagpole toppling, became clear as to what Dharma is. In addition, from the time of the Sixth Chinese Ancestor on, there have been many within the five families of our tradition who have clarified what the foundation of mind is through encountering a single word or half a verse of Scripture. Surely, not all these were people who were always diligently practicing the Way by just doing seated meditation, were they?"

I would point out, "What you need to know is that neither of those particular persons—the one who, upon seeing a color, clarified what Mind is and the one who was awakened to the Way by a resonating sound—spent time in speculation and critical assessment whilst diligently practicing the Way, nor did they create a second 'person'—be it a 'self' or an 'other'—while they were directly engaged in that practice."

He may then ask, "People in India and China have always been basically honest and straightforward. Because both countries have been centers of culture, their people, once instructed in the Buddha Dharma, have succeeded in entering the Way ever so quickly. Our country, from ancient times, has been extremely short on benevolence and wise discernment, so that it has been hard for us to accumulate genuine spiritual seeds. Because we have been a land of savage barbarians, such seeds are, alas, not to be seen. Furthermore, the monks in our country are inferior even to the householders in those great nations. Our people are foolish, narrow-minded, and petty. They cling tightly to transitory successes and delight in surface virtues. Will such a people, even if they do sit in meditation, succeed in quickly realizing the Buddha Dharma?"

I would point out, "As you say, people in our country are not yet universally benevolent and wise in their discernings, and are also given to laziness and prejudice. Were they given the Dharma straight on, Its Sweet Dew would turn sour and become a poison to them. A taste for fame and gain comes easily, whilst delusion and grasping are hard to let go of. Even so, it does not necessarily require the worldly wisdom of either the mundane or the saintly for people to recognize and enter the Buddha Dharma so that they may serve as a ferry to carry others beyond the mundane. While the Buddha was in the world, a certain man came to experience all four fruits leading to arhathood when he was hit in the head with a handball. And a certain woman came to understand what the Great Way is due to her playfully dressing up in a monk's kesa* in a previous life. These frivolous and dense persons were both like foolish and confused animals. Nevertheless, when their genuine faith and trust rescued them, they were provided with a path which led them out of their delusions. Also, upon seeing an ignorant old monk dumbly sitting, a faithful lay woman who had brought him food opened up and was awakened. Her experience did not depend on 'enlightened wisdom' or on Scripture, nor did she rely on words or explanations: she was rescued simply by her genuine faith and trust.

"Also, Shakyamuni's instructions have been spreading through the three thousand worlds for something like two thousand years. The countries within these worlds are of all kinds and are not necessarily lands of benevolence and wisdom, nor are their people necessarily always astute or intellectually brilliant! Even so, the true Dharma of the Tathagata has always possessed a marvelous, unimaginably great, meritorious strength so that, when the time is ripe, It spreads throughout those lands. When people duly train and practice with genuine faith and trust—be they bright or dull—all alike will realize the Way. Do not give way to thoughts that our country is not a land of benevolence and wise discernment, and that its people

are too foolish or stupid to be able to understand what Buddha Dharma is. Moreover, the people are all well endowed with the genuine seed of spiritual Wisdom. Simply, it is rare for them to be in exact harmony with It, and, as a result, they do not yet completely accept and enjoy It."

The preceding exchange of questions and responses may prove confusing due to my shifting back and forth between the perspectives of guest and host.[14] To some extent, I may have made illusory flowers appear in an empty sky. Be that as it may, since our tradition's principle of diligent practice of the Way by doing seated meditation has not yet been brought into this country, how sad for those with spiritual intentions! It is for this reason that I have brought together a bit of what I saw and heard whilst in China, contenting myself with setting down the genuine keys of clear-eyed Masters, so that those desirous of training in the practice can learn about them. Apart from this, I do not have sufficient time, at present, to set down the rules and regulations of Zen monasteries, or the rankings, standards, and ceremonies for temples. Besides, such a task must not be done in haste.

Even though our country lies east of the Dragon Sea separating it from China, which lies far beyond the clouds and mist, around the time of the Japanese emperors Kimmei and Yōmei in the sixth century, the Buddha's Teachings from the western lands gradually moved eastwards, to the good fortune of our people. However, Their terms and subtleties, as well as the ritual formalities associated with Them, have often become entangled, so that doubts of how to do the practice have weighed heavily. But now, if you make your tattered robe and your patched-up alms bowl your lifetime career, setting up a thatched hut near to where the white rock protrudes from the moss-covered cliffs, whilst sitting upright and polishing your training, in a twinkling you will be one who 'goes beyond being Buddha', and you will quickly bring to a conclusion the Great Matter for which you have trained and studied your whole life.[15] These are precisely the friendly admonitions of

14. That is, between the attitude of a questioning disciple and of a responding Master.

15. In this sentence, the description of a trainee is not simply an idyllic portrait of a hermit-monk but also gives a concise metaphoric description of how someone is to train, employing traditional Chinese Zen Buddhist imagery. The robe, or kesa, is associated here with the Precepts; its tatters arise from one's breakage of those Precepts, and its repair results from one's true resolve to do better. The alms bowl suggests one's willingness to train by being all-accepting; its patches are the signs of one's attempt to repair 'leaks' in that willingness. Despite the less than 'perfect' condition of these two aspects of training, the trainee is still willing to continue on, while recognizing that there are still things he needs to do and that he

Master Kodon of Dragon's Fang Mountain and the legacy in how to train bequeathed by Makakashō on Cock's Foot Mountain. As to the procedures for doing seated meditation, you should follow what is in my *Rules for Meditation,*[16] which I compiled during the recent Kanroku period (1225-1227).

Although one should have a ruler's permission before spreading Buddhism throughout a country, if we think once again of the legacy from the Divine Vulture Peak, then all the rulers, lords, ministers, and generals who have appeared in the hundreds of thousands of millions of lands are persons who had graciously accepted the Buddha's decrees, and now, due to their past lives, live on without losing sight of their cherished desire to protect the Buddha Dharma. Those regions in which spiritual help is spread, wherever they may be, need not be strictly Buddhist countries. Therefore, in letting the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors flow forth, you need not necessarily wait for all conditions to be perfect. Just think of today as the day to begin!

Thus, I leave what I have assembled here for those who are concentrating upon their desire for the Buddha's Teachings, as well as for any within the genuine stream of students who, in search of the Way, drift as a cloud and lodge as a floating reed.

Written down on the mid-autumn day in the third year of the Kanki era (September 12, 1231) by me, the mendicant monk Dōgen, who went to Sung China that I might receive and bring back the Transmission of the Dharma.

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need not be 'perfect' in order to keep going onwards. The hut often refers to one's 'place of training'—namely, one's body and mind—which is kept 'thatched' so that the trainee protects himself from the karmic and emotional storms that may assail him either physically 'outside himself' or mentally 'within himself'. While his seat is within the mundane world with all its surrounding growth, he chooses to sit before the white rock, Bodhidharma's 'wall', which is not only a physical place of meditation, but a mental one as well. If he then sits upright—doing his meditation, acknowledging the tatters he has made of the Precepts and the leaks from his lapses in being all-accepting, and attempting to repair them—he will quickly be able to let go of any thoughts of arriving at Buddhahood and will resolve his spiritual question.

16. *Fukan Zazengi.* A translation of this work by Rev. Master P.T.N.H. Jiyu-Kennett appears in *Serene Reflection Meditation*, 6th ed. revised (Mount Shasta, California: Shasta Abbey Press, 1996), pp. 1-3.

2

On the Great Wisdom That Is Beyond Discriminatory Thought

(Makahannya-haramitsu)

Translator's Introduction: *Makahannya-haramitsu*, the earliest dated Dharma talk in the *Shōbōgenzō*, was given by Dōgen to his monks in his renovated monastery, which he had renamed Kannondōri. The discourse consists largely of paraphrases from the *Scripture Which Is the Heart of the Prajñāpāramitā,* also called the *Heart Scripture* (J. *Hannya Shin Gyō*), and lengthy quotations from the *Larger Scripture on Spiritual Wisdom* (J. *Dai Hannya Gyō*), plus a poem by his Chinese Master Tendō Nyojō, to all of which he has added comments.

There is an allusion in the discourse that may not be as obvious in the translation as it is in the original. In passages from the *Larger Scripture on Spiritual Wisdom*, the questioner is identified as Tentaishaku, 'the Lord of the Heavens', a common epithet for Indra. Thus, at first glance, the ensuing dialogue would appear to be between a divine personage from the Hindu pantheon and Subhuti, one of the Buddha's chief disciples who was known for his understanding of the Buddha's Teachings on the Immaculacy of Emptiness. However, in the original text the reader is given a subtle hint as to the questioner's real identity when Subhuti addresses him as Kaushika ('He Whose Eyes Look Askance at Things'), an epithet applied to Indra when taking human form. In other words, the questioner is a human who, from haughtiness, considers himself the equal of the Lord of the Heavens, as he looks askance at the Buddha's Teachings.

> When Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva* was at one with the deepest Wisdom of the Heart which is beyond discriminatory thought, He saw with utmost clarity that the five skandhas which comprise one's whole being were as space.

The five skandhas are our physical form, our sensory perceptions, our mental conceptions and ideas, our volition, and our consciousness: they are a fivefold manifestation of Wisdom. 'To see with utmost clarity' is what is meant by Wisdom. To clarify what the meaning and import of this is, He said, "Our physical form is as pure and unbounded as space," and "The Unbounded is what our physical form is." Our physical forms are forms: the Unbounded is what is unbounded. The former are 'the hundreds of individual sproutings':[1] the Latter is the multiplicity of form.

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* See *Glossary.*

1. 'The hundreds of individual sproutings', an expression often used by Dōgen, refers to the

When the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought manifests in twelvefold form, It is the twelve sensory fields—that is, the six sensory faculties along with what they perceive to be the properties of all thoughts and things. And this Wisdom has an eighteenfold manifestation, comprised of the six sensory faculties of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, tactile body, and mind plus their six perceived properties, respectively, color, sound, odor, taste, feel, and mental contents, along with the six forms of consciousness associated with eyes, ears, nose, tongue, tactile body, and mind. And this Wisdom has a fourfold manifestation: the arising of suffering, its cause, its ultimate extinguishing, and the method whereby it is extinguished. And this Wisdom has a sixfold manifestation, consisting of almsgiving, keeping to the Pure Precepts, practicing patience, making diligent effort, doing serene reflection meditation, and applying wise discernment. And the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought has a singular expression, which is constantly manifesting before our very eyes here and now: It is total and absolute enlightenment. And the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought has a threefold manifestation as past, present, and future. And this Wisdom has a sixfold manifestation as earth, water, fire, wind, space, and consciousness. And this Wisdom has a fourfold manifestation which occurs in daily life as moving, standing, sitting, and reclining.

> There was once a mendicant monk in the assembly of the Tathagata Shakyamuni who was thinking to himself, "I bow in deepest respect to the profound Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought. And well I should, for even though within this Wisdom there is nothing that gets born or becomes extinct, nevertheless You have been able to establish that by following the Precepts, our physical skandha will be beyond dualistic morality; that by meditative contemplation, our sensory skandha will be tranquil and freed from all false ideas; that by practicing wise discernment, our consciousness skandha will be wise in what it sees; that by practicing non-attachment, our volitional skandha will be fully liberated from defiling passions; and that by practicing all-acceptance, our thought skandha will have complete comprehension of this liberated state. You have also been able to establish that the fruits of entering the stream of training, the fruits of returning but once more to the world of desire, the fruits of not returning to that world, and the fruits of arhathood* truly exist. You have been able to establish that there is the enlightenment solely realized by oneself, as well as the supreme awakening wherein all

manifold forms that arise or 'sprout up' because of a set of conditions, persist for a while, then disappear when the conditions that brought them about change.

> things are viewed alike as enlightened.[2] You have been able to establish that there are the Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, as well as to establish that there is a turning of the Wheel of the Dharma and a ferrying of all manner of sentient beings to the Other Shore."
>
> The Buddha, aware of these thoughts, addressed the monk, saying, "It is just as you have been thinking, just as you have thought: the profound Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought is subtle and difficult for the intellect to fathom."

In regard to the private thoughts of this monk, whenever someone bows down in respect to all things, the wisdom that prompted this monk to say, "even though there is no being born or becoming extinct, nevertheless…," expresses a 'bowing down in respect'. When there is this moment of 'being duly respectful', the wisdom of what the Buddha was able to establish in this connection is right before your very eyes and encompasses everything the monk had in mind, from the practicing of Precepts, meditation, and wise discernment up through the ferrying of sentient beings to the Other Shore. It is this that we mean when we speak of *'Mu'*.[3] What this expedient term *'Mu'* refers to can be realized through the practices just outlined, for this *'Mu'* is the profound, subtle, and inscrutable Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought.

> Someone present, a veritable Indra, Lord of the Heavens, asked the Buddha's long-standing senior disciple Subhuti, "O great virtuous one, if some bodhisattva or mahasattva* were desirous of studying this 'Profound Wisdom That is Beyond Discriminatory Thought', just how, precisely, should he go about studying such a thing?"
>
> Subhuti replied, "O you who look with doubting eyes, if a bodhisattva or mahasattva is desirous of learning about the Profound Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought, he should study It with a mind as completely open as open space, with no preconceptions to hamper him."

Thus, 'learning what Wisdom is' means 'to be free of preconceptions': 'being free of preconceptions' is what 'studying Wisdom' is.

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2. A reference to Shakyamuni's awakening on His own, without the aid of a master, and His realizing as part of that enlightenment experience that all things are simultaneously enlightened just as they are.

3. *'Mu'* is the Japanese reading of the Chinese character that is sometimes used in Zen texts to represent That which 'is beyond' the ability of any words or descriptions to encompass.

This Indra Lord of the Heavens then addressed the Buddha, saying, "World-honored One, if virtuous men and women were to receive this teaching on Your purported 'Wisdom That is Beyond Discriminatory Thought', hold to it, and recite it to others chapter and verse, were they to explore its implications and then lecture upon it to others, what could they possibly do to defend it from critical attack? All I am really asking, O World-honored One, is that You, out of Your compassion, give us instruction."

This time, the Buddha's senior monk Subhuti responded to this lordly Indra by saying, "O you with the doubting eyes, do you see any way in which this Teaching can be defended?"

The lordly one replied, "No, O great virtuous one, I do not see any way in which this teaching can be defended."

Subhuti then said, "O you with the doubting eyes, if virtuous men and women explain the matter as the Buddha has, the profound Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought will, in fact, be Its own defense. If virtuous men and women put forth the matter in this way, they will never be far from the profound Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought. You need to understand that, as long as any being—human or non-human—seeks to be told what It means while acting from a desire to do harm or mischief, that being will ultimately not be able to realize It. O you with the doubting eyes, if your motive is to defend and protect It, you should act in accordance with what has been said here. All bodhisattvas and the Deepest Wisdom That is Beyond Discriminatory Thought are in no way different from the desire to defend and protect That which is like the clear and empty sky."

Understand that to receive this Teaching, keep to It, accurately recite It to others, and explore Its implications is precisely what 'defending and protecting Wisdom' means. To desire to defend and protect It means that you receive the Teaching, keep to It, accurately recite It to others, and so forth.

My former Master, a Buddha of old, once said in verse:

My whole being is like the mouth of a bell suspended in empty space:
It does not ask whether the wind blows east or west, north or south.
Impartial to all, it sounds the Wisdom for the sake of others:
"Bong bong bong," says the wind bell, "bong bong bong."

This is the sounding of Wisdom, which is the right Transmission of Buddhas and Ancestors. His whole being is this Wisdom, the whole of others is this Wisdom, the whole of oneself is this Wisdom, the whole of east and west, north and south is this Wisdom.

> Shakyamuni Buddha then said, "Shariputra,[4] when it comes to the matter of the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought, all sentient beings, of whatever sort they may be, are to be offered spiritual provisions and respectfully bowed to, each treated as a place where a Buddha dwells. Your exploration of the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought should be done as though you were making spiritual offerings and respectfully bowing to the Buddha as the Awakened and Revered One.
>
> "And why so? Because the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought is not something different from the Buddha as the Awakened and Revered One, nor is the Buddha as the Awakened and Revered One something different from what the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought is. The Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought is, in fact, the Buddha as the Awakened and Revered One, just as the Buddha as the Awakened and Revered One is, in fact, the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought.
>
> "And how so? Because, Shariputra, all Tathagatas as arhats and Fully Awakened Ones have, without exception, been able to appear in the world by virtue of the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought. And because, Shariputra, all bodhisattvas, mahasattvas, pratyekabuddhas*, arhats, non-returners, once-returners, and stream-enterers have, without exception, been able to appear in the world by virtue of the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought.[5] And because, Shariputra, in all the worlds, the ten ways of doing good, the four meditations leading to heavenly states, the four meditative states beyond the world of form, and the five wondrous faculties have, without exception, been able to appear in the world by virtue of the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought."

Thus it is that the Buddha as the Awakened and Revered One <u>is</u> the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought: the Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought <u>is</u>

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4. Shariputra was one of the chief disciples of the Buddha. He was renowned for his spiritual Wisdom.

5. These four terms, from arhat through stream-enterers, are the 'four stages of arhathood' and are explained briefly in the *Glossary.*

all the various thoughts and things. All these various things are as empty space: they are neither born nor do they wholly die, they are not stained nor yet immaculate, increasing not, decreasing not. When this Wisdom Beyond Discriminatory Thought is manifesting before our very eyes, It is the Buddha as the Awakened and Revered One manifesting before our very eyes. Inquire into this; keep it in mind. To make offerings and bow respectfully is, indeed, to look with reverence to, trust in, and faithfully follow the Buddha as the Awakened and Revered One: to look with reverence to, trust in, and faithfully follow Him is to <u>be</u> the Buddha as the Awakened and Revered One.

This was delivered to the monastic assembly at Kannondōri during the summer retreat in the first year of the Tempuku era (1233).

On the twenty-first day of the third lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (April 29, 1244), this was copied out by Ejō, while in the chief disciple's quarters at Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province.

3

On the Spiritual Question as It Manifests Before Your Very Eyes

(Genjō Kōan)

Translator's Introduction: *Genjō Kōan,* composed by Dōgen for a lay disciple, resembles in form and style a type of essay popular in medieval Japan. Highly evocative, often seemingly ambiguous, rich with imagery, resonant in tone, heavily endowed with phrases and sentences based on Chinese syntax, this discourse is akin to a prose poem. In content, however, it is clearly Buddhist in intent. That is, the focus is not on intellectual constructs and logical progressions of thought, but on lived experiences and what our relationship is to them. For instance, his remarks about time are not intended to be studied as if they were part of some philosophical or scientific discourse, but to be viewed as a way of talking about how we experience time while we train upon the path to Buddhahood. This can be seen, for instance, in the opening paragraph of Dōgen's discourse, where the first sentence refers to the span of time which a trainee perceives as a period of 'undergoing training', and the second to the span during which this trainee experiences his 'being enlightened'.

In that period of time when Buddhas give voice to the Teachings on existence in all its variety, there is talk of 'delusion and enlightenment', of 'practice and training', of 'birth', of 'death', of 'Buddhas', of 'ordinary beings'. In that period of time when it is no longer relevant to speak of an 'I' along with its 'whole universe', there is no delusion or enlightenment, no Buddhas or ordinary beings, no being born, no extinction.[1]

Because the path to Buddhahood naturally springs forth from a feeling that there is 'too much' of one thing or 'not enough' of another, there is 'birth and

1. This opening paragraph is an allusion to the two 'states' of 'being engaged with doing one's training' and 'experiencing the realization of Truth'. While someone is consciously engaged in the former, talk employing terms which the intellect can grasp is common and helpful, but when someone is living in the direct experience of one's True Nature, all such terms lose their relevance. Dōgen's statement here and in later, similar passages may suggest that when someone realizes enlightenment, training stops. He clarifies the error of such an interpretation in Discourse 11: On 'Just for the Time Being, Just for a While, for the Whole of Time is the Whole of Existence' *(Uji)*. Prior to delivering the present talk, he had already taken up the question of the relationship between training and enlightenment with his monks in his work, "Rules for Meditation" *(Fukan Zazengi),* written in 1233.

extinction', there is 'delusion and enlightenment', there are 'ordinary beings and Buddhas'. Yet, even though this is the way things are, still, we feel regret at a blossom's falling and we loathe seeing the weeds envelop everything.

To undertake enlightening the whole universe through one's training while carrying the burden of a self is a delusion: to enlighten oneself through training while urging all things onward is an awakening from delusion. To have a great awakening to one's delusion is to be as all Buddhas are: to be greatly deluded within one's enlightenment is to be as ordinary people are. Moreover, there are those folks who realize enlightenment on top of their enlightenment: there are those folks who are deluded within their delusion.

When Buddhas are truly Buddhas, They need not perceive that They Themselves are Buddha. Even so, having awakened to Their Buddha Nature, They will carry along with Themselves Their confirmation of Their Buddha Nature.

Since we are provided with both a body and a mind, we grasp onto the physical forms we see: since we are provided with both a body and a mind, we cling to the sounds we hear. As a consequence, we make ourselves inseparable from all things, yet we are not like some shadowy figure 'lodging' in a mirror or like the moon in water.[2] Whenever we witness what is on the one side, its opposite side will be in darkness.[3]

To learn what the path to Buddhahood is, is to learn what the True Self is. To learn what the True Self is, is to forget about the self. To forget about the self is to become one with the whole universe. To become one with the whole universe is to be shed of 'my body and mind' and 'their bodies and minds'. The traces from this experience of awakening to one's enlightenment will quiet down and cease to show themselves, but it takes quite some time for all outer signs of being awake to disappear.

When someone first begins to search for the Dharma, he is very far from the realm of the Dharma: once he has had the Dharma passed on to him, he will quickly become one who abides in his Original State.[4]

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2. Here, Dōgen uses the image of 'the moon in water' to refer to something that is only a reflection of the actual object; the phrase is not used in the sense of the common Buddhist metaphor for the Buddha Nature reflected in all things.

3. That is, when we are still clinging to things, we do not see the duality inherent within our own thinking and thus we perceive only one side of the duality.

4. Dōgen's point is that not knowing the Dharma impedes one's arriving at Truth. That is, the passing on of the Dharma helps the trainee to realize his Original State, but it does not necessarily cause him to realize It simply upon hearing the Teachings.

When someone riding in a boat turns his gaze towards the shore, he misjudges the shore to be moving: when he fixes his eye firmly upon the boat, he will recognize that the boat is plowing on. Likewise, should you let your mind and body run riot, going along with what you perceive the world to be, you will make the mistake of thinking that you have a permanently abiding self-nature within your body and mind. If you commit yourself fully to traveling the Way and you then return to that Place within, the reason why there is no personal 'self' within the whole universe will become clear.

A stick of firewood, once reduced to ashes, cannot once again revert to being a stick of firewood. Nevertheless, you should not hold onto the opinion that the ashes are the future of that which the stick was the past. What you need to understand is that, when firewood is persisting in the physical state of being firewood, there will be a before and there will be an after. Although there is a before and an after, there is a now which is cut off from 'before' and 'after'. While ashes persist in the physical state of being ashes, they will have their 'after' and their 'before'.

After a stick of firewood has turned to ashes, just as it does not once again become firewood, so after someone dies, he does not come back to life again. Even so, as was the customary way the Buddha taught, we do not speak of life becoming death, which is why He spoke of things 'not arising'. The Buddha also passed on through His turning of the Wheel of the Dharma that death does not become life, which is why He spoke of things 'not perishing'. Life is the situation at one time, and death is the situation at another. For example, it is like winter and spring: do not imagine that winter 'becomes' spring, or speak of spring 'becoming' summer.

When someone has spiritually awakened, he resembles the moon's 'residing' in water: the moon does not get wet nor is the water shattered. Although the moon is a great, broad light, it lodges in the tiniest bit of water. The moon at its fullest, as well as the whole of the heavens, lodges within the dewdrop poised on a blade of grass, just as it lodges in any single bit of water. Spiritual awakening does not tear a person asunder; thus, it is like the moon's not making a dent in the water. A person no more impedes his spiritual awakening than a dewdrop impedes the moon in the heavens. The deeper the reflection, the higher the light: how long the period of your spiritual awakening will last depends on how large your drop of water is and how full your moon is seen to be.

When the Truth has not yet completely filled someone's body and mind, he is apt to think that his knowledge of the Dharma is already sufficient. When the Truth sufficiently fills his body and mind, he feels sure that some aspect is still lacking. By way of analogy, when you go out in a boat to the middle of the ocean, beyond the sight of any land or mountain, and look around you, all you see is the

vast encircling water. Or, as another might put it, there is nothing to be seen. Be that as it may, this great Ocean is not a vast circle, and how we perceive It does not depend on what direction we look in. It is simply that we cannot exhaust what the rest of this Ocean's nature is, though some have likened it to a dragon's splendid palace or its jeweled necklace. Although this Ocean extends as far as our eye can see, after a while It will seem to be simply 'a vast encircling'—indeed, even the whole universe will seem to be just the same.

Whether we are caught up in the dust of the world or have removed ourselves from it, we are involved with many doings, yet we only realize what our eyes can see through practicing meditation and studying the Way, for we are limited by what we can see and comprehend at the present moment. Taking our spiritual tradition's viewpoint of the universe as your model, you will realize that, apart from appearing angular or round, the remaining attributes of the ocean and the mountains are vast and limitless, and that the world exists on <u>all</u> sides of us. But it is not only as if It were just on all sides. You must realize that It is what is beneath your very feet and within every drop of water.

A fish in the ocean, wherever it swims, finds the water limitless; a bird in the sky, wherever it flies, finds the air unbounded. Nevertheless, fish and birds, from the very beginning, have always been one, respectively, with the water and the sky. To put it simply, when their need is great, their use is great; when their need is small, their use is small. Acting in this manner, they never fail to make the fullest use of their environs at all times, nor do they ever reject what they may find there. Even so, if a bird is pulled out of the air, in short order it will perish; if a fish is pulled out of the water, it will quickly die. You must have realized by now that 'the water' signifies 'life', just as 'the sky' signifies 'life'. 'A bird' refers to '<u>a</u> life', just as 'a fish' refers to '<u>a</u> life'. 'Being alive' should be taken to mean '<u>the</u> bird', as well as '<u>the</u> fish'. Moreover, this should be taken one step further, since the situation is no different for spiritual practice and realization, or with the flow of life and the life in that flow. Nevertheless, after someone has thoroughly explored what 'water' is and what 'sky' is, if 'the bird' or 'the fish' should remain so that they stand in contrast to 'water' or 'sky', then he will not find his way in either Ocean or in Space: he will not arrive at the Place.

When you arrive at this Place, you will have been spiritually questioning what is before your very eyes by traveling the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors. When you locate the path you have been following, you will discover that it is the spiritual question that has been before your very eyes as you have traveled the Way. This path and this Place are neither large nor small, neither 'self' nor 'other', nor something from the past, nor something revealed in the now: It is just as It is. Thus, when someone spiritually practices and realizes the Way of the Buddhas, it is

a matter of his having received some Teaching and penetrated into that Teaching, a matter of his having received some sentence of instruction and put into practice what that sentence says. Here is where the Place is. Accordingly, as we penetrate deeper and deeper into the Way, our spiritual surroundings, which we should have known, we clearly do not know, but because we are living together with our ever-deepening investigation of Buddha Dharma and training with It, we have what we need.

To be sure, having once realized the Place, you must not analyze It in order to understand It through discriminatory thought and, thereby, reduce It to fit your own opinions. When you have bored through to certainty, It all at once manifests before your very eyes, yet That which is the most intimate will not necessarily take some visible form. 'Manifesting before your very eyes' may or may not have a literal meaning.

> Meditation Master Mayoku Hōtetsu, one summer day, sat fanning himself when a monk came up to him and said, "It is said that the nature of the wind always abides and that there is no place where it does not circulate, so why does my reverend monk fan himself?"
>
> The Master replied, "You are merely aware that the Nature of the Wind always abides, but you have not yet grasped the principle that there is no place where It is not present and active."
>
> When the monk then asked, "What is this underlying principle of Its being universally present?" the Master simply continued to fan himself. The monk respectfully bowed to the Master.

Unequivocal and genuine experiences of the Buddha's Dharma, which is the living Path of the genuine Transmission, are just like this. Since It always abides, the Master did not need to use a fan; yet, even when it is not used, the Sound of the Wind—that is, the voicing of the Dharma—can be heard. Not to know That which is ever-abiding is not to know the Nature of the Wind. Because the Nature of the Wind is always abiding, the winds of training for our Buddhist family bring about the manifesting before one's very eyes of That which is the True Gold of the Great Earth, and bring to maturity the nourishing waters of the Greatest River.

This was written around mid-autumn—that is, the fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month—in the first year of the Tempuku era (September 20, 1233), and given to my lay disciple Yanagi Kōshū of Kyūshū.

Included in 1252.

4

On 'The One Bright Pearl'

(Ikka Myōju)

Translator's Introduction: *Ikka Myōju* follows a form that Dōgen later uses in many of his discourses of the *Shōbōgenzō*. Namely, he relates, often in his own words, one of the classic kōan stories found in Chinese Zen literature. During the telling, he inserts his own commentary to clarify or underscore points which are relevant to monastic training and perspectives.

In this world of ours, there once was a Great Master named Sōitsu, who lived in the monastery on Gensha Mountain in Fukien Province, in the great kingdom of China. His religious name was Shibi and his family name was Sha. While still in lay life, he was fond of fishing and would sail his boat out on the Nant'ai River, as was the habit with all sorts of fishermen. However, he had not the slightest hint that the Golden Fish would, of Its own accord, leap up into his boat, without Its even being hooked.

Near the beginning of the Chinese Kan-t'ong era of the T'ang dynasty (ca. 865), he suddenly aspired to leave the dust of secular life behind him; so, in his thirtieth year, he abandoned his boat so as to dwell on a mountain.[1] Having awakened to the ceaseless fluctuations of the floating world, he had come to recognize the great worth of the Buddha's Way. In time, he went to Seppō Mountain to seek spiritual instruction under Great Master Seppō Shinkaku and to practice the Way day and night.

One day, with his travel bag upon his back, he set out from the mountain top, intending to deepen his practice by studying with other Masters elsewhere. Just as he was climbing down, he stubbed his toe on a rock, and it began to bleed and smart terribly. Suddenly he had a deep realization.

> Thereupon, he said, "This body has no independent existence, so where is the pain coming from?" He then returned to Seppō and told him what had happened.
>
> Seppō asked him, "Is this Shibi the Austere Monk?"

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1. 'To dwell on a mountain' is a common Buddhist metaphor for entering monastic life and doing one's meditation as part of that life. 'Abandoning his boat' refers not only to Shibi's giving up his attachment to a beloved object in his lay life but also to his giving up his simply drifting along on the river of life.

Shibi responded, "I have never dared to deceive anyone about that!"

Delighted by this response, Seppō said, "Who could fail to cherish this response? Who could have expressed the Matter* more fully?"

On another occasion, Seppō called out to him, "O Shibi, my austere monk, why haven't you gone out on a pilgrimage to seek a Master to train with?"

When Shibi answered, "Bodhidharma did not come east to China for that, nor did the Second Ancestor go west to India for that!" Seppō highly praised what he had said.

Shibi had been devoted to fishing for so much of his life that he had never set eyes on the voluminous body of Buddhist Scriptures and spiritual writings, even in his dreams. Nevertheless, when he put the depth of his resolve to realize the Truth above all else, a spirit of determination emerged, which surpassed that of the other monks around him. Seppō realized that Shibi excelled all others within the assembly and praised him as towering above Seppō's other disciples.

For his robe, Shibi used a coarse hemp cloth, and, since he had no other change of clothing, it was filled with hundreds of patches. Against his skin, he wore an undergarment made from paper, and for a lining between the two, he used mugwort leaves kneaded until they were pliant. Apart from working under Seppō, he did not seek out any other Master to train with. Even though he kept to just one Master, he certainly found within himself the spiritual strength to become the heir to his Master's Dharma.[2]

In time, he realized the Way and, afterwards, in pointing It out to people, he would say, "The whole universe throughout all its ten directions is the One Bright Pearl."

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One time a monk inquired of him, "Reverend Monk, I have heard you say that the whole universe throughout all its ten directions is one bright pearl. How am I, as a trainee, to understand the meaning of this?"

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* See *Glossary.*

2. Since making pilgrimages to spiritually call on other Zen Masters was still a widespread tradition among Chinese Zen trainees of his day, Dōgen is pointing out that this is not an essential practice, and that what is truly essential is for each trainee to find within himself the spiritual strength to be a Dharma heir of their Master.

> Shibi answered, "Since the whole universe throughout all its ten directions is the One Bright Pearl, what use is there in trying to understand this with the intellect?"
>
> However, the next day the Master asked this monk, "The whole universe throughout all its ten directions is the One Bright Pearl, so what do you think this means?"
>
> The monk responded, "Since the whole universe throughout all its ten directions is the one bright pearl, what use is there in my trying to understand this with my intellect?"
>
> Shibi replied, "It is indeed clear to me that, even though you are blindly looking into the demon's cave within the pitch black mountains of ignorance, you are doing your training."

Shibi was the first to voice the statement, "The whole universe throughout all its ten directions is the One Bright Pearl." Its basic idea is that the whole universe throughout all its ten directions is not to be thought of as vast and grand or minute and insignificant, nor as made up of angles and curves, nor as the center or core of something else, nor does it act like some lively fish darting about in a sea of space or like dewdrops brightly whirling in the wind. Moreover, because it is not something that was born and will die, not something that is coming or going, it is being born and dying, coming and going all the time. Because of its being just what it is, it is from here that the days of yore have forever departed and from here that the present arises. By thoroughly doing one's training, who will say, once he has looked deeply, that the universe is just something fluttering about. Or who will say, once he has fully investigated the matter, that the universe is merely a motionless thing?

In speaking of 'throughout all its ten directions', Shibi was referring to our ceaselessly creating a 'self' by chasing after things or creating 'things' through our pursuit of a self. In response to a disciple's statement, "When we give rise to delusory feelings, we alienate ourselves from Wisdom," Shibi affirmed that there was such a separation by a turn of his head or a change of expression on his face. This was his hitting the nail on the head through word or gesture; it was the trainee presenting his understanding and the Master agreeing with it. Because we create 'things' through the pursuit of a self, the universe is ever restless throughout all its ten directions, unceasing in its arising, but since this causal principle is one that exists prior to the arising of anything, its operation is beyond our intellect to control.

This 'One Pearl' is still not Its name, but It can be expressed so, and this has come to be regarded as Its name. The 'One Pearl' is what refers directly to That which is beyond the measurement of years, for in Its extending endlessly over the

past, It also extends over the present and into the future. Even though we have a body and mind at this very moment, they are the Bright Pearl. They are not some vegetation sprouting up here or there, nor are they 'mountains and rivers that arise from a duality like that of Heaven and Earth'. They <u>are</u> the Bright Pearl.

By his question, "How am I, as a trainee, to understand the meaning of this?" the monk seems to be operating from his delusory karmic* consciousness, yet, as a manifestation of the functioning of That Which Is Reality, this consciousness <u>is</u> the Absolute Principle of Reality. Further, you need a foot of water to make a one-foot wave rise up, which is to say that a ten-foot high pearl will give off a ten-foot high light.

Shibi's way of stating this was to say, "Since the whole universe throughout all its ten directions <u>is</u> the One Bright Pearl, what use is there in trying to understand this with the intellect?" This saying is the way of speaking which Buddhas inherit from Buddhas, Ancestors inherit from Ancestors, and Shibi inherited from Shibi. Even if you were to try to evade being Their heir to this way of speaking, there is ultimately no place where you can go to completely evade It. Even were you able to evade the obvious for a while, sooner or later there will be some remark that will occasion Its manifesting before your very eyes.

> However, the next day the Master asked this monk, "The whole universe throughout all its ten directions is the One Bright Pearl, so what do <u>you</u> think this means?"

On the previous day Shibi had given voice to the Dharma of Certainty; now he was giving voice to the Dharma of Uncertainty. By voicing the Dharma of Uncertainty on this day, he was saying just the reverse of what he had said the previous day, as he smiled and nodded his head approvingly.

> The monk, parroting Shibi, responded, "Since the whole universe throughout all its ten directions is the one bright pearl, what use is there in my trying to understand this with my intellect?"

One could say that the monk was riding the robber's own horse in pursuit of the robber. Shibi has taken a completely different approach, whereby the Old Buddha explains the Matter for you. Just turn your light around and return to That which shines within, for how much use is there in trying to understand This through the intellect? When someone gives voice to It, it will be a matter of 'seven sweet dumplings and five savory dumplings';[3] even so, it <u>will</u> be instructive guidance

3. Sweet dumplings are associated with Southern Chinese cuisine, and savory ones with the cuisine of the Northern Chinese. Like many other references to food in Zen texts, 'dumplings' serves as a metaphor for the Dharma, which spiritually nourishes the trainee.

that is 'south of the Hsiang River and north of the Liu', that is, two different ways of designating the same area.

> Shibi said, "It is certainly clear to me that, even though you are blindly looking into the demon's cave within the pitch black mountains of ignorance, you <u>are</u> doing your training."

You must realize that the faces of the sun and the moon have never yet at any time changed places. The face of the sun always rises as the sun's face; the face of the moon always rises as the moon's face. Therefore, even if we say that the season right now is mid-summer, we should not say that it is our Original Nature that is sweltering. This is why this Bright Pearl exists not only without a beginning but also without an end. It is '<u>One</u> Bright Pearl as the whole universe throughout all its ten directions': It is not said to be two or three. Your whole being <u>is</u> your pair of eyes of the True Dharma; your whole being <u>is</u> the embodiment of Truth; your whole being <u>is</u> a single line of Scripture; your whole being <u>is</u> luminosity; your whole being <u>is</u> your whole heart and mind. When your whole being exists, your whole being has no impediments: it is perfect in its completeness and is ever-turning, like the rumbling on of cart wheels. Because the merit of the One Bright Pearl takes some 'visible' form like those stated above, Avalokiteshvara* and Maitreya* exist right now, seeing Its forms and hearing Its sounds. And there are old Buddhas and there will be new Buddhas who manifest in bodily form in order to give voice to the Dharma.

When the time is right, you will find the Dharma enfolded in empty space or enfolded within the lining of that which clothes you; or you will find It stored in the folds of the dragon's chin or stored in the folds of the king's headdress, and all are the One Bright Pearl that is the universe throughout all the ten directions. Keeping It enfolded beneath your robes is proper deportment: do not talk about displaying It on the outside. Enfolding It in your headdress or underneath your chin is proper deportment: do not imitate those who would playfully display It upon their headdresses or around their necks. Whenever you are drunk on delusion, there will be a Close Friend who will present you with this Jewel, and you must, without fail, present this Jewel to your Close Friend. Come a time when you take to hanging the Jewel around your own neck, you are, beyond doubt, drunk with delusion. Because this is the way things are, the world in its entirety <u>is</u> the One Bright Pearl.

Dōgen's point is that even though the flavor and size of the servings of Dharma may differ among Buddhists because of such things as local customs and habits, the Dharma Itself is fundamentally the same in Its capacity to sustain those who ingest It.

This is why, even though it seems that, on the surface, things are either fluctuating or still, everything is the Bright Pearl. To know that this is precisely how the Jewel is, is what the Bright Pearl is. In this manner we can perceive the sounds and forms of the Bright Pearl. Because this is the way things can be, even though you may be uncertain about whether or not something is the Bright Pearl, you should have no doubt about whether or not there is the Jewel. Whether you actively pursue your doubts, cling to them, or let them go, they are simply momentary observations of little significance, fleeting images of small weight.

Do we not cherish the Bright Pearl with Its infinite variety of shades and hues like this? Its multifaceted, brilliantly hued sparkling is the merit of the universe throughout all its ten quarters; who can take this from you by force? After all, there is no one in any of the market places of this world who throws away a roof tile, so do not worry about which of the six worlds* of existence you will fall into due to causality.[4] Never hidden, It is, from the first, synonymous with always doing one's training, and doing it consistently as well as thoroughly. The Bright Pearl is your Original Face: the Bright Pearl is your very Eye in all Its brightness.

Nevertheless, neither you nor I know precisely what this Bright Pearl is and precisely what It is not, but hundreds of notions and opinions about this subject all too obviously have become associated with 'food for thought'. Now, through Shibi's voicing of the Dharma, we have learned and had clarified for us the point that what appears as our body and mind is, and always has been, the Bright Pearl. Hence, the conscious mind is not what we are, so who is it that arises and passes away? Why worry yourself over whether or not something is the Bright Pearl? Even if you are perplexed as you grope along, do not think that this is not the Bright Pearl. Since there is no action or thought that can be generated that is not of the Bright Pearl, even your going back and forth, in and out of the demon's cave within the black mountains is nothing other than the One Bright Pearl.

This was delivered to the monks at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple, Uji Prefecture, Yamashiro Province, on the eighteenth day of the fourth lunar month in the fourth year of the Katei era (June 2, 1238).

It was transcribed by me, while in my quarters in Kippō-ji Temple, Shibi Manor, Yoshida County, Echizen Province, on the twenty-third day of the seventh lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (August 10, 1243).

The monk Ejō,
Abbot's Assistant

4. That is, just as those in the marketplace can recognize the value of a mere roof tile, so even someone's being reborn in some hell, for instance, will have its spiritual value.

5

On Conduct Appropriate for the Auxiliary Cloud Hall

(Jūundō-shiki)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse, Dōgen presents an outline of how trainees should behave in the auxiliary Meditation Hall, which was annexed to the main Monks' Hall. This newly built hall would have been used primarily by novice monks. The tone of the original is somewhat informal, for the text was written not in Chinese, which was the customary language used for setting down monastic regulations, but in colloquial Japanese. In the discourse, Dōgen is not putting forth a series of impersonal, formalized rules and regulations so much as giving helpful instructions to those new to the etiquette of Buddhist monastic life, particularly as it would have been carried out in the Chinese monastery where Dōgen had trained. Some points which may strike a present-day reader as obvious were apparently not so obvious for Zen trainees in Dōgen's day.

Those who earnestly desire to seek the Way and to cast off fame and gain may enter: those who are aimless and lack sincerity should not. Should you have entered for the wrong reasons, once you have determined that you have made a mistake, you should depart. Understand that when the desire to seek the Way arises in your heart, you are someone who has, then and there, discarded fame and gain. In the billions of worlds that comprise the universe, it is quite rare to be affiliated with the rightful heirs of the Buddha. Even though our country, from ancient times until now, has treated this connection with Buddhism as something fundamental to it and has been keenly concerned for what the future may hold, what is right now before you should be what you focus on.

The community in the Hall should be in accord with one another, like milk mixing with water, and should encourage each other in practicing the Way. Though we are now, for a short while, as guest and host,[1] later we will forever be Ancestors of the Buddha. Because this is so, do not lose sight of your sincere belief that each and every one of you has encountered something which is hard to encounter, and practices something which is difficult to practice. This is called the true heart of the Buddha's Teachings: without doubt you will become a Buddha; you will become

1. 'Guest' refers to a Meditation Hall trainee and 'host' to the monk responsible for overseeing his or her training.

an Ancestor. You have already left your home and departed from your native village. You have asked to be as clouds: you have asked to be as water.[2] In aiding yourself, you aid the Way. And, as a consequence, the gratitude this community has for you surpasses even that which we have for our parents. Father and mother are your intimates for only a short while within the passage of birth and death: this community will be together with you on the Buddha's Path at all times.

You should not become fond of going outside the monastery. Once a month, for instance, is tolerable for something essential. Those of old lived on remote mountains and trained in isolated forests; not only was their involvement with worldly affairs rare, they also severed all their other worldly ties. You should train yourself in an attitude which conceals Its light and covers Its traces, for now is the time to train as though your hair were on fire. Were you to waste this time by surrounding yourself with worldly entanglements, how lamentable that would be! Alas, the impermanent cannot be relied on, for who knows on what blade of roadside grass our dew-like life will fall?

Whilst in the Hall, you should not read books, even though it may be a book on meditation, nor should you bring in personal correspondence. Since it is a Meditation Hall, you should pursue the Truth through diligently practicing the Way and relegate to the well-lit Monks' Common Room the illumining of your mind through study of the ancient writings on the Teachings. Do not waste even a moment, for you should devote yourself exclusively to your training.

You should keep the monk in charge of the Meditation Hall informed of what you are up to, day and night. Do not indulge in diversions as it pleases you to do, for this will take its toll on the monastic discipline of the community. Though we know not when this life will end, it will end. Doubtless, it will later be regretted, should you end your life amidst idle amusements.

You should not lend support to the misconduct of others, nor should you look upon the human errors of others with a hateful heart. There is an old saying, "Not to see the faults of others is what is natural for me." Also, you should not make comparisons of the faults of one trainee with those of another, but should just put into practice your own virtues. Even though the Buddha had brought His own faults under control, He had no feeling of loathing for those who had not.

You should, by all means, let the monk in charge of the Meditation Hall know what you are going to do before doing it, no matter whether it is an important or a small undertaking. Someone who is given to doing things without mentioning

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2. A common Japanese term for one who has entered monastic life is *unsui*, 'clouds and water', a metaphor for one who asks for no fixed abode and desires to live free of preconceptions and entanglements.

them to the Meditation Hall Monk should depart. When the courtesies between guest and host become confused, it is difficult for the trainee to distinguish what is true from what is merely superficial.

When in the Hall or in its vicinity, you should not speak in a loud voice or loiter about, conversing. And the monk in charge of the Meditation Hall will see to this.

You should not do kinhin[3] in the Hall to keep yourself awake.

You should not hold onto your rosary whilst in the Hall, nor should you recite the names of the Buddhas or chant Scriptures aloud in the Hall on your own. But it is all right to do so were a donor to request a Scriptural recitation for a ceremony.

You should not blow your nose noisily or loudly cough up phlegm whilst in the Hall. You should not laugh aloud. You should grieve that the proper ways have not yet fully permeated your training. You should regret that time, in unseen ways, is depriving you of your life of training in the Way. Thereby, you may naturally have a feeling of being a fish in a small puddle.[4]

When together in the Hall with the community, you should not wear richly brocaded robes, but just a simple one made from waste cloth. From ancient times, those who awakened to the Way all dressed like this.

You should not enter the Hall in a drunken state. Should you make such a mistake out of a lack of mindfulness, you should bow down and do sange.[5] Also, you should not bring rice wine in with you, nor should you enter the Hall reeking of strong pickles.

If two monks start quarreling, both should retire to the Common Room because they are not only hindering their own practice, they are also disturbing the practice of others. Someone who sees a quarrel breaking out and does not stop it is just as much at fault.

All who refuse to involve themselves in keeping these instructions will be expelled from the Hall.[6] Those who are amused by, or are in sympathy with, such behavior by trainees are also at fault.

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3. A form of walking meditation which all monks do together between periods of seated meditation, but which is not to be done individually during general meditation periods or when other monks are sleeping.

4. That is, be aware of how limited one's life really is.

5. 'To do sange' is to recognize that what one has done is counter to the Precepts and to ensure that it is accompanied by true remorse and repentance.

6. Having been deprived of a place to sleep and eat within the monastery, the monk may then

You should not invite visiting monks or laity into the Hall and thereby disturb those trainees already assembled there. When conversing with a privileged guest within even the vicinity of the Hall, you should not speak in a loud voice, to say nothing of bragging about yourself as a trainee out of greed for the patron's offerings.

Those with a long-standing determination to train and, obviously, those who are sincerely on a pilgrimage may enter, but even at such a time, you should not fail to let the monk in charge of the Meditation Hall know of their presence.

Seated meditation should be done as it is done in the Monks' Hall. Never neglect to attend morning meditation and services, or evening instruction periods.

In accordance with monastic etiquette, someone who spills the contents of his alms bowl onto the floor during the morning or noon meal should 'see to the oil'.[7]

Beyond question, you should adhere to the Precepts as set down by the Buddhas and Ancestors. You should impress the monastery's regulations into your bones and engrave them onto your heart.

You should pray that you may live your life tranquilly and do your training in the Way free of attachment to any preconceptions.

The preceding items are the body and mind of former Buddhas: follow them with reverence.

The twenty-fifth day of the fourth lunar month in the first year of the En'ō era (May 29, 1239).

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choose either to leave the monastery or to turn his heart around (that is, do 'sange') by giving up his intransigence and asking to be reinstated.

7. A standard practice for someone committing a light breach of monastic etiquette through carelessness, in which the monk is personally and/or financially responsible for seeing that the oil lamp in front of the Hall's main statue is provided with sufficient fuel, so that it may keep burning over the next twenty-four hours.

6

On 'Your Very Mind Is Buddha'

(Soku Shin Ze Butsu)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse, Dōgen makes clear that the saying "Your very mind is Buddha" is to be understood in a particular way: it is a remark addressed to one who has already given rise to the intention to train and realize Buddhahood. Those who have not yet done so are apt to think of 'mind' as referring to intellective, perceptual, and cognitive functions, which are viewed as constituting a personal 'self', a misconception akin to the Shrenikan view that such functions constitute an immortal soul. Because of this danger, Dōgen gives a detailed presentation of this Shrenikan view, which he immediately refutes through quoting the kōan story alluded to in Discourse 1: A Discourse on Doing One's Utmost in Practicing the Way of the Buddhas *(Bendōwa)*. He then goes on to show how the meaning of the saying "Your very mind is Buddha" can be explored more deeply and what some of its implications are.

What the Buddhas and Ancestors, without exception, have traditionally maintained and entrusted to us is, simply, that this very mind of ours is Buddha. Even so, the statement "Your very mind is Buddha" did not come from India, but was first heard in China. Many trainees have misunderstood what it means, but have failed to explore their misunderstanding to their advantage. Because many have not seen their misunderstanding through to its obviously erroneous conclusion, they have wandered off onto non-Buddhist paths.

Hearing talk of 'your very mind', those befuddled by doubts speculate that the intellective, cognitive, and perceptual functions of sentient beings are synonymous with 'the Mind of enlightenment before someone has awakened to It', and accordingly fancy themselves to be a Buddha. This is due to their never having encountered a genuine Teacher of Buddhism.[1]

The sort of non-Buddhist view I am referring to existed in India under the name of the Shrenikan view. The following is in accord with that viewpoint:

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1. That is, had they met such a Teacher, he would never have permitted such folly. The original text carries no implication that anyone who encounters a genuine Teacher of Buddhism will automatically and instantaneously be freed from all delusions, or that, if a disciple is deluded, it is inevitably because his or her teacher is inadequate. Even the Buddha could not help those who would not take His Teachings to heart.

A Great Principle resides in our present body whose presence can readily be discerned. Specifically, it discriminates between suffering and pleasure, knows what is cold or hot, and perceives the misery of pain and the itch of desire. It is not limited by any physical thing or affected by any surrounding conditions. Although physical things come and go, and conditions arise and disappear, this Spiritual Intelligence forever exists, unchanging.

This Spiritual Intelligence permeates all living beings far and wide. The mundane and the saintly alike harbor this spirit, without any difference between them. Even though the illusory flowerings of false teachings may exist in humans temporarily, once they become aware of this wise discernment through its accord with a particular thought, physical 'things' fall away and conditions disappear; thereupon, the Spiritual Intelligence alone remains in its original nature, ever clear and bright. Even though the bodily aspect ultimately breaks down, the Spiritual Intelligence comes out intact, just as when a house is being completely destroyed by a fire, the householder emerges and escapes.

This Intelligence, which is clear in its functions yet whose substance is mysterious and beyond our grasp, is referred to as the nature of those who are spiritually awakened and wise. We also call it 'Buddha', as well as 'enlightenment'. We ourselves, as well as all others, are equally endowed with it; the deluded and the enlightened are both permeated with it. Whatever myriad things and conditions may exist, this Spiritual Intelligence is neither linked to these conditions nor the same as these things, but abides forever throughout the eons. Since all conditions existing in the present are dependent on the Spiritual Intelligence, they can be regarded as being real. Because they are innately conditioned to arise, they actually exist. Even so, they do not abide forever, as does the Spiritual Intelligence, since they only exist for a while before they disappear.

Because this Intelligence understands things in mysterious ways, without depending on light or darkness, it is called 'that which knows what the spirit is'. It is also referred to as 'the True Self', 'the Source of Enlightenment', 'One's Original Nature', and 'One's Fundamental Substance'. One who awakens to this Original Nature is said to return to the Ever-abiding and is called a Mahasattva, that is, 'a Great Being who has returned to the True'. After this, he does not

transmigrate through the cycle of birth and death, but comes to realize the non-arising, non-perishing 'Ocean of his Original Nature', and enters therein.

Apart from this Intelligence, there is no reality or truth. To the extent that someone is unaware of this Nature of his, the three temporal worlds and the six worlds* of existence compete to arise.

Such is the view of the non-Buddhist Shrenikans.

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The fully awakened Chinese National Teacher Echū of the great T'ang dynasty once asked a monk, "Where do you come from?"

The monk replied, "I come from the South."

The Master asked, "Do you have good spiritual friends in the South?"

The monk replied, "We have quite a few."

The Master asked, "What do they point out to people?"

The monk said, "Spiritual friends there point out to trainees, right from the start, that their own minds are Buddha. 'Buddha' means 'enlightenment', and we are all, right now, fully equipped with a Nature that experiences and knows through what It sees and hears. This Nature is innately good, and has the capacity to raise the eyebrows and make the eyes twinkle. Since It exists throughout the whole body, when It rustles through the head, the head 'knows', and when It rustles through the foot, the foot 'knows'. This is why it is called samyak-sambuddha, 'the One Who Knows Everything Perfectly'. No other Buddha exists apart from this. This body of ours experiences birth and extinction, but the Nature of our mind, from time without beginning, has never yet arisen or perished. The body's arising and perishing is like a dragon's changing his bones for lighter ones,[2] a snake's shedding its skin, or someone moving from a former residence—that is, the physical aspect is transient, but this Nature is permanent. This is roughly what is taught in the South."

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* See *Glossary*.

2. A reference to the Chinese folk belief that fossil bones belonged to dragons who had left them behind in order to live and fly about in the sky.

> The Master said, "If this is so, then there is no difference between their teaching and the non-Buddhist view of the Shrenikans. The latter view states that there is a sort of 'Divine Nature' in this body of ours, which has the capacity to know pain and itch, and that, when the body disintegrates, this divine aspect departs from it, like a householder fleeing when his house is on fire—the dwelling is impermanent whilst its householder is forever. Were the matter like this, there would be no way, upon examination, to distinguish right from wrong, so how can we accept it as correct?
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> "When I used to go on pilgrimages, I would often encounter this sort of thing. In recent times it has flourished even more widely. These 'good friends' would gather together an assembly of some three to five hundred and, seeing stars in their listeners' eyes, would say that this is our Buddhist tradition's Teachings in the South. Taking up the Sixth Ancestor's *Platform Scripture*, they would alter what It says by garnishing It with vulgar and rude comments and stories, whilst adulterating or deleting the wise and saintly intentions of the Ancestor, thereby deluding and confusing their followers. How can this be considered the uttering of our Teachings? How painful! It will be the death of our tradition. Were we intended to take our perceptual and cognitive functions to be our Buddha Nature, Vimalakirti* would certainly not have said that the Dharma is apart from our perceptual and cognitive functions, and that, when we are occupied with these functions, then this is being engaged in perceiving and cognizing, and is not a seeking of the Dharma."

The National Teacher was a leading disciple of the former Buddha Daikan Enō and was the outstanding good spiritual friend of celestial and human beings. Grasping the spiritual import of what the National Teacher has pointed out, you should take it as the model for your training and study. When you detect the discriminatory view of the non-Buddhist Shrenikans, do not follow it.

In more recent times, of all our colleagues who are Abbots or Masters in the various monasteries of Great Sung China, none compares with the National Teacher. From ancient times, a spiritual friend who could equal the National Teacher has still not entered this world. And yet, ordinary, worldly people mistakenly hold the opinion that Zen Masters like Rinzai and Tokusan are the equals of the National Teacher. Fellows who hold such a view are all too many. These people, alas, are not clear-eyed teachers.

The saying "Your very mind is Buddha," which Buddhas and Ancestors have assured us is so, is something not even dreamed of by non-Buddhists or by followers of the two Lesser Courses.* Only Buddhas and Ancestors—and They alone—pass on that one's mind is Buddha, and only They experience its meaning to the fullest. Having heard of it, They have put it into practice and have come to realize it for Themselves.

The term Buddha implies that the hundreds of karmic seedlings from defiling passions have been weeded out and discarded. However, I am not speaking of this term as it is applied to a sixteen-foot tall golden statue.

The term *soku* ('that which is immediate') refers to one's spiritual question before one deals with what is right before one's eyes, and before one learns to avoid the blunders that may arise from not dealing with that question.

The term *ze* ('is') refers to the three temporal worlds of 'was', 'is', and 'will be', from which there is no retreating or escaping, and which are not merely a figment of the mind.

The term *shin* ('mind') implies the walls and fences of discernment before they have been mudded fast with mortar, and before one has fabricated anything or added fixtures.

We may thoroughly examine these terms in the form, for instance, of "Your very mind is Buddha," or in the form of "Your mind, at this very moment, is Buddha," or "Buddha, right now, is your mind," or "Your very mind is what 'Buddha' is," or "This 'Buddha' is your mind right now." To thoroughly explore the meaning in this manner is precisely an instance of one's very mind being Buddha. In promoting the meaning, the Ancestors passed it on in a straightforward manner as "Your very mind is Buddha," and it has come down to us today, accurately transmitted in this form.

The so-called 'mind which has been correctly Transmitted' refers to the whole mind being synonymous with 'all thoughts and things', and all thoughts and things are what constitute 'the whole mind'. This is why someone in the past once said, "When a person fully realizes what his mind really is, not an inch of solid ground will exist upon the earth." You must understand that when you fully realize what your mind is, the whole canopy of the heavens is knocked down and the spinning earth is completely torn asunder. On the other hand, when you come to see what your mind really is, the earth becomes three inches thicker.

An ancient one of great virtue once said, "And just what is this wondrously pure, bright mind? It is the great earth with its mountains and rivers, along with the sun, the moon, and all the stars."

Now you know clearly: what is called 'mind' is the great earth with its mountains and rivers; it is the sun, the moon, and the stars. Even so, when you take what is being expressed here one step further, something is lacking; when you draw back from what it is saying, something has gone too far. The mind that is the great earth with its mountains and rivers is simply the great earth with its mountains and rivers: there are no surging waves nor is there any wind-driven spindrift to disturb or upset it. The mind that is sun, moon, and stars is simply sun, moon, and stars: there is no fog nor is there any mist to obscure its clarity. The mind that is the coming and going of birth and death is simply the coming and going of birth and death: there is no 'being deluded' nor is there any 'realizing enlightenment'. The mind that is the tiles* and stones for walls and fences is simply the tiles and stones for walls and fences: there is no mud nor is there any water to make a binding mortar. The mind that is the four elements* and the five skandhas* is simply the four elements and the five skandhas: there are no wild horses of unbridled willfulness nor any monkeys with insatiable desires. The mind that is the Master's Dharma seat and his ceremonial hossu* is simply the Master's seat and hossu: there is no bamboo whose joints block clear passage nor is there any wood twisted up with knots. Since this is the way things are, "Your very mind is Buddha" means, pure and simply, that your very mind is Buddha; all Buddhas are, pure and simply, all Buddhas.

Thus, "Your very mind is Buddha" refers to all Buddhas, that is, to Those who have given rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood by practicing and training until They awaken to Their enlightenment and realize nirvana. Those who have not given rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood by practicing and training until they awaken to their enlightenment and realize nirvana are not those whose very mind is Buddha. Even if, for a fraction of an instant, you give rise to the intention to train and realize the Truth for yourself, your very mind will be Buddha. Even if, for the tiniest, imperceptible moment, you give rise to the intention to train and realize the Truth for yourself, your very mind will be Buddha. Even if, for immeasurable eons, you give rise to the intention to train and realize the Truth for yourself, your very mind will be Buddha. Even if, for the length of only one single thought, you give rise to the intention to train and realize the Truth for yourself, your very mind will be Buddha. Even if, half-heartedly, you give rise to the intention to train and realize the Truth for yourself, your very mind will be Buddha. Nevertheless, were you to say of someone who is taking ever so long to train to become a Buddha that his mind is not Buddha, you have not yet seen your mind to be Buddha, nor do you yet know what the saying means, nor are you yet

truly training in the Way. You have not met a genuine Teacher of Buddhism who knows how to open up your very mind to be Buddha.

The term 'all Buddhas' means Shakyamuni Buddha: Shakyamuni Buddha is synonymous with one's very mind being Buddha. At that very moment when all the Buddhas of past, present, and future have become, do become, and will become Buddha, without fail, They become Shakyamuni Buddha. This is what "Your very mind is Buddha" means.

This was delivered to the monastic assembly at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple, Uji County, Yamashiro Province, on the twenty-fifth day of the fifth lunar month in the first year of the En'o era (June 28, 1239).

It was written down by me on the twelfth day of the seventh lunar month in the third year of the Kangen era (August 5, 1245), while in the chaplain's quarters at Daibutsu-ji Temple, Yoshida Prefecture, Echizen Province.

Ejō

7

On Washing Yourself Clean

(Senjō)

Translator's Introduction: On the surface, *Senjō* contains Dōgen's instructions to his monks on the monastic procedures for dealing with the act of relieving nature. On a deeper level, it is a detailed analysis of how a monk is to practice mindfulness at every stage in the process of handling that most physical and mundane of activities, one that humans too often treat with disgust or think of as not having any spiritual relevance. On a deeper level still, it reveals how attending to the mundane can function as a spiritual cleansing.

The tone of the original is difficult to reproduce in English without misleading the reader. Much of it is written in what might be called Japanese cookbook style. That is, the instructions are often expressed as though addressed impersonally. For example, a rather literal rendering of a particular phrase would be "Next, one washes one's hands," which in English cookbook style would appear as "Next, wash your hands." The latter, however, may sound in the present context like an injunction or rigid command, a laying down of the rules. In this translation, I have tried to find a middle path between the rather stilted, impersonal 'one' and the raw command of the imperative, and have therefore chosen the simple instructional style, "Next, you wash your hands." Only on occasion does Dōgen use a form that is herein rendered as "You should," and even more rarely one that is a negative command, "Do not."

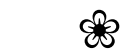
In historical terms, Dōgen's instructions represent the most advanced ideas of personal hygiene for his times, even though today some of them might be considered unsanitary. Had he lived in the present, undoubtedly his instructions would take into account the principles of modern-day hygiene. It is quite likely that his views were influenced by his Chinese Master Tendō Nyojō, who, as a novice, had requested to be appointed as Head of Purification (that is, the monk in charge of the lavatories) for his monastery, and he was later allowed to take on this responsibility.

The realization of enlightenment through practice, which the Buddhas and Ancestors have protected and preserved, has been described by Them as 'being freed from stain'.

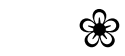
> The Sixth Ancestor Enō once asked his disciple Nangaku Ejō of Kannon-in Temple, "Looking back, do you think that what we do has always been based on realizing enlightenment through practice?"

Nangaku responded, "It is not that realizing enlightenment by means of practice has not existed in the past, but should someone act in a way that is stained, then he will not realize it."

Enō said, "It is this 'being freed from stain' that all Buddhas have preserved in Their hearts and kept in mind. You have done this, as have I, as have our Indian Ancestral Masters."



It says the following in the *Great Scripture on the Three Thousand Forms of Everyday Behavior for Monks,* "Purifying the body refers to cleansing yourself of its excretions and keeping your nails clipped." Therefore, even though our bodies and minds are unstained, there is a method for cleansing the body, which is also a method for cleansing the mind. Not only will it purify body and mind, it will also purify those in our nation and those who train 'under a tree'. Even though no one in our nation has ever yet been sullied by the dust of existence, purifying is what all Buddhas keep in mind. Upon reaching the fruits of Buddhahood, They do not neglect or discontinue Their cleansing. The meaning of this is impossible to fully fathom. Proper decorum is one thing that is meant by it, and realizing the Way through ordination is one form of proper decorum.



A verse in the "Pure Deeds" chapter of the *Avatamsaka Scripture* says:

Whilst relieving nature,
By all means pray that all sentient beings
Will eliminate their impurities
By completely ridding themselves of lust, anger, and delusion.

Whilst washing up afterwards,
By all means pray that all sentient beings
May turn towards the Peerless Way
And leave worldly things behind them.

Whilst cleaning off the soil with water,
By all means pray that all sentient beings
Will avail themselves of purifying patience,
That they may, after all, be free from any defilement.

Water is not necessarily 'fundamentally pure' nor is it 'fundamentally impure': the body is not necessarily 'fundamentally pure' nor is it 'fundamentally impure'—so

it is with all things. This does not mean that water is or is not something sentient; it does not mean that the body is or is not something sentient—again, so it is with all things. This is what the World-honored Buddha gave voice to. Even so, it is not water that makes our bodies clean: relying on the Buddha's Dharma and keeping to the Buddha's Dharma is what 'washing yourself clean' really means. This Dharma is the very being and spirit of what the Buddhas and Ancestors have personally and correctly Transmitted; It is the very words and phrases used to describe That which the Buddhas and Ancestors directly experienced; It is the very Light in which the Buddhas and Ancestors clearly abide and to which They hold. In sum, It is an immeasurable, unbounded, meritorious virtue which They make manifest before our very eyes. When, at the right moment, They supply the forms for training body and mind, They fully provide the basic elements of conduct, which are timeless. As a result, what we call 'the mind and body of one who is training' naturally manifests.

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You should keep the nails on your ten fingers clipped. Whereas 'ten fingers' is a reference to the fingernails of both your hands, right and left, you should likewise clip your toenails. It says in the Scriptures that we are doing wrong if we let our nails be longer than an eighth of an inch.[1] So, you should not let your nails grow long like non-Buddhist old-timers do, and you should take care to clip your nails. In present-day Sung China, there were those fellows within our monastic family who lacked an eye for the way to train and let their nails grow very long. On some, they were one or two inches long, and on some, even as long as three or four inches.[2] This is counter to the Teachings and is neither the flesh nor the spirit of the Buddha's Dharma. They acted like this because they did not maintain the customs or practice of the Buddha's family. Among the venerable Elders who have held to the Way, such behavior is not to be found.

Similarly, there were some of my fellow monks who let their hair grow. This is also counter to the Teachings. Do not make the mistake of thinking that this may be in accord with the True Teaching just because some say that monks in a great and powerful country do it.

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1. The inch referred to here is about forty percent longer than an English inch. Hence, the recommended length, in Western terms, would be just under three-sixteenths of an inch. Similar computations should be made for later references to lengths in inches or feet.

2. It was a long-established custom in China, particularly among the Confucianist public officials, to let their nails grow as long as possible as a sign that they did not engage in menial labor, which they considered demeaning.

My former Master, a venerable Buddha, had the following words of instruction for any monks in the Greater Sangha who sported long hair or nails,[3] "It is neither lay folk nor monks who do not understand the practice of our shaving our heads—it is animals. Who among the Buddhas and Ancestors of the past failed to shave Their heads? If any of you fail to grasp why you should shave your head, you are truly an animal through and through." After instructing his community in this way, many of my fellow monks who had not shaved their heads for years did so. Whether giving a Dharma talk in the Meditation Hall or speaking informally to his monks, he would snap his fingers loudly while pointing in rebuke, saying something to the effect of:

> For what reason I know not, you have rashly let your hair and nails grow long. How pitiful that you have let the human body and mind which you have received fall into aimless ways. For the past two or three hundred years, the Way of the Ancestors has been in decline, so that fellows like you are many indeed. Such persons have sometimes become heads of temples, and have even received titles of respect from emperors, whilst making a pretense of spiritually leading others—what a misfortune for both human and celestial beings alike! Now, in all the mountain temples here in China, people with hearts intent on the Way are all disappearing, and those who would gain the Path have long been dying out. Only hooligans remain!

When my Master spoke in this manner, those from various places who had imprudently been given the title of Elder did not grumble about this, nor did they offer any defense either.[4]

You should realize that long hair on a monk is something that the Buddhas and Ancestors remonstrated against and that growing long nails was something that non-Buddhists practiced. The descendants of Buddhas and Ancestors should not take delight in these sorts of practices, which are contrary to the Dharma. You should keep yourself pure in body and mind, and keep yourself clean by seeing that you trim your nails and shave the hair off your head.

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Do not neglect to wash after relieving nature. Shariputra once brought about the conversion of a non-Buddhist by means of this Teaching. Although it was not

3. 'The Greater Sangha' refers here not only to the monks in Tendō Nyojō's monastery but also to any other monks who might come to visit.

4. The term 'Elder' generally refers to someone who has been a monk for ten years or more.

something that the non-Buddhist originally expected, nor was it something that Shariputra had consciously intended, even so, when the forms of dignified behavior of the Buddhas and Ancestors are kept before one's eyes, false teachings are spontaneously humbled.[5]

When doing your training under a tree in the forest or out in the open, you will not find a privy already built. So, using water from some convenient valley stream or river, clean yourself off with sand. Since you do not have any ashes at this time to cleanse yourself with, simply use two sets of seven balls of sandy soil. The way to use these fourteen balls is as follows: after having removed your robe, folded it, and put it aside, you take soil that is sandy [rather than dark earth], shape it into balls about the size of a large soybean, and place these atop a stone or some other convenient place, with two rows of seven balls each. Then, provide yourself with some pebbles that can be used for scouring your hands. After that, you relieve yourself. After you have finished relieving yourself, use a wooden or bamboo toilet spatula, or some paper, to clean yourself off. You then go to the edge of the water to wash. Make sure to take three of the balls with you to clean yourself. Put one of the balls in the palm of your hand, add just a little water, mix the ingredients together until their consistency is thinner than mud and quite soupy, and begin by cleaning off your genitals. Then take another sand ball and, preparing it as before, clean off your buttocks. Again, prepare a sand ball as before and, in the same manner, clean off your hands.[6]

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After monks began to reside in temple quarters, they constructed a building that they referred to as 'the Eastern Quarters'. Sometimes it was called a water closet and at other times a lavatory. It is absolutely essential to have a lavatory in a place where a family of monks resides.

When going to the Eastern Quarters, you should be sure to take a hand towel with you. The way to do this is to fold the hand towel in half and put it over your left shoulder, letting it hang down over the sleeve of your gown. When you have

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5. The reference to Shariputra and the non-Buddhist may be to an incident recorded in the *Code of Behavior for Members of the Greater Sangha*, where a non-Buddhist was converted to Buddhism out of admiration and respect for Shariputra's scrupulous observance of the code of monastic decorum, which the man had observed whilst the monk was on his alms rounds. Shariputra was one of the two chief disciples of Shakyamuni Buddha.

6. Dōgen does not specifically indicate how the remaining eleven balls are to be used, but considering how he uses numbers in other discourses, it is likely that he means, "If you need more than three, well, you have them right at hand."

arrived at the Eastern Quarters, you should hang your towel over the clean-clothes pole. Hang it in the same way it was when it was hanging on your shoulder. If you come wearing a nine- or seven-striped kesa,* you should be sure to hang it next to your towel. You should hang it so that it will not fall off. Do not hastily toss it over the pole.

You should be sure to pay particular attention to the name marker. The name marker is for putting your name on the pole. Write your name on a piece of white paper in the shape of a full moon and then align this marker on the rack. We use a name marker so that we will not forget where we have put our robe. When our monks come in numbers, we must be sure not to confuse our place on the rack with that of others.

If a number of monks come and line up at this time, make shashu* and bow in greeting to the others. When bowing in greeting, you need not bow deeply: simply hold your hands in shashu before your chest and bow in recognition of the others. When in the Eastern Quarters, we acknowledge the monks assembled by bowing to them even when we are not in our robes. If your two hands are not occupied or you are not carrying something in them, you should keep them in shashu and bow.

If one of your hands is already occupied, or when you are carrying something in one hand, you should make your bow with a one-handed gasshō.* In bowing with a one-handed gasshō, the hand is raised, with the fingers slightly cupped as if you were going to use the hand to scoop up water; the head is lowered slightly, as in greeting. When another monk behaves in this way towards us, we should behave similarly: when we behave in this way, the other monk should do likewise.

The procedure for taking off your undershirt and outer robe is to remove your robe along with the undershirt by bringing the two sleeves together in back, putting the two arm holes together, and lifting up the sleeves. You then fold the two sleeves, one atop the other, over the garment. Next, with the left hand, grasp the back of the collars and, with the right hand, draw up the robe and fold it down the middle of the sleeve bags[7] and the two collars. Having folded over the two sleeves and collars, you again fold the robe in two, lengthwise, and drape it over the pole with the collars on the far side; the skirt of the robe and the sleeve cuffs hang on the near side of the pole. That is to say, the robe hangs at the waist over the pole.

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* See *Glossary.*

7. On some monastic robes, the sleeves are quite full, forming a bag-like appendage.

Next, avoid mistaking whose towel is whose when there are two poles and two towels are hanging one in front of the other. So that your towel does not get separated from your robe or get taken by someone who has not hung up a towel, tie it down by wrapping it around your robe two or three times and tying it, without letting your robe fall onto the ground. Then, facing your robe, you make gasshō.

Next, you take a sash cord and hang it over your shoulders.[8] Then go to the wash stand and fill a clean bucket with water; carrying the bucket with your right hand, go into a toilet stall. In putting water in the bucket, do not fill it to the brim, but fill it up nine-tenths of the way.

When you reach the lavatory door, you should change your slippers. Put on a pair of rush slippers, leaving your own slippers by the front of the lavatory door. This is what is meant by 'changing slippers'.

It says in the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple,* "When you need to go to the Eastern Quarters, by all means anticipate this need. Deal with it in time, so that you do not hurry from urgency. Give yourself time to fold your kesa, and leave it on your table in the Monks' Quarters or on the clean pole in the lavatory."

Upon entering the toilet stall, close the door with your left hand. You next pour just a little water from your bucket into the toilet basin. Next, put the bucket in front of you in the place provided for it. Then, while standing, face the basin and snap your fingers three times. Whilst snapping your fingers, your left hand is held in a fist at your left side at waist level. Next, you lift and gather up your under-skirt by its corners, face the door and, straddling the basin between your feet, squat down and relieve yourself. Do not soil either side of your garments; do not let them get stained front or back. During this time, you should remain silent. Do not talk or joke with the person in the next stall, chant, sing, or recite anything aloud. Do not spit or blow mucus from your nose onto the area around you. Do not strain or make grunting sounds excessively. You should not write on the walls. Do not dig at or draw on the ground with your toilet spatula; it should be used for cleaning yourself after you have evacuated your bowels. Also, if you use paper, you should not use old paper or paper with characters written on it.

You should keep in mind the difference between a clean spatula and a soiled one. The spatula is eight inches long, triangular in shape. In thickness, it is the width of one's thumb. Some are lacquered, others are not. Put your soiled spatula

8. A sash cord is used to tie clothes out of the way.

in the used spatula box. Clean ones will already be in the spatula stand. The spatula stand is kept near the sign in front of the toilet basin.

After using a spatula or paper, the way you clean yourself is as follows: hold the bucket in your right hand and moisten your left hand well. Then, cupping some water in your left hand, you first clean off your genitals three times. Then, you wash your buttocks. This is the way you should clean yourself.

Do not tip the bucket roughly, spilling the water into your hand and quickly using it all up.

After you have finished cleaning yourself, put the bucket down in its proper place; then, take the used spatula and wipe it clean and dry with paper. You should wipe your genitals and buttocks dry. Next, adjust your under-skirt and robe with your right hand, and, also with your right hand, pick up the bucket. Then go out the door, take off the rush slippers, and put on your own. Next, you return to the wash stand and put the bucket in its original place.

Next, you should wash your hands. With your right hand you take a spoonful of ashes, place it atop some pebbles, drip some water on them, and wash your contacting hand with your right hand,[9] using the pebbles to scour it, just as though you were cleaning rust off a sword. You should wash with ashes in this manner three times. Then, you should take some sand, add some water, and wash three times. Next, take some cleansing powder made from ground orange seeds in your right hand, moisten it with water from the small bucket, and wash by rubbing your hands together. The washing should be done thoroughly, even up your forearms. You should wholeheartedly devote your attention to washing in a conscientious manner. Ashes thrice, sand thrice, and cleansing powder once—all together seven times, an appropriate number. Next, you wash in a large bucket. This time, you simply wash in cold or warm water, without using any cleanser, sand, or ashes. After washing once, transfer that water into the small bucket, put in fresh water, and rinse both hands. In the *Avatamsaka Scripture*, a verse says:

> *When washing your hands,*
> *By all means pray that all sentient beings*
> *May acquire the finest hands*
> *With which to receive the Buddha's Teachings.*

When you use a water ladle, you should, of course, hold it with your right hand. When using it, do so quietly, without making a great noise with bucket or ladle.

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9. In India, China, and Japan, it was customary to use the left hand to clean oneself after relieving oneself. As this hand might well become soiled through this contact, it was called, literally, 'the contacting hand'.

Do not splash water about, scatter the cleansing powder, or get the area around the water stand wet. That is to say, do not be hasty or careless: do not be disorderly with things or treat them roughly.

Next, you dry your hands with the towel for general use or dry them with your own towel. Once you have finished drying your hands, go to where your robe is hanging over the pole, undo the sash cord, and hang the cord over the pole. Next, hang your towel over your left shoulder and rub some incense on yourself. There is rubbing incense for general use. It is made of fragrant wood in the shape of small vials. The size of each is about the thickness of a thumb and four times that amount in length. You take a piece of string about a foot long and thread it through the holes that are bored in each end of the incense stick. This is hung over the pole. When you rub it between the palms of your hands, the fragrance of this incense will naturally impregnate your hands.

When you hang your sash cord over the pole, do not hang it over another one so that they become entangled, and do not leave it in a disorderly fashion.

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When matters are handled in this way, everything will be a purified Buddha Land, a Buddha World well adorned. You should do everything with care, without a lapse: you should not act from haste, as though in a dither. Do not entertain the thought, "If I hurry, I can get back to what I was doing." You should keep in mind the principle that, when you go to the Eastern Quarters, the Buddha's Dharma is not something to be talked about, but lived.

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Do not stare at the faces of monks coming and going.

❀

In cleansing yourself whilst in the lavatory, it is fine to use cool water, since it is said that hot water may cause diarrhea. Using warm water to wash your hands will not prove disturbing to your health. A kettle has been provided for heating water to wash your hands with.

Concerning the duties of the monk in charge of the lavatory, it says in the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple,* "Later in the evening, see that water is heated and oil is put out for the night lamp. Always make sure that there is someone to take over the boiling of the water, and do not let the community do it with a discriminatory attitude." From this it is clear that both hot and cold water are used.

If the interior of the lavatory becomes dirty, you should screen off the entry door and hang the sign that says 'Dirty' on it. If a bucket is accidentally knocked over, you should screen off the entry door and hang up the 'Spilled Bucket' sign. Do not enter the building when such signs have been put up.

Even though you may have already entered a stall, if there is someone else who snaps his fingers to let you know of his presence, you should leave shortly.

In the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple* it says, "If you do not wash yourself clean, you cannot truly take a seat in the Meditation Hall or bow to the Triple Treasure. Also, you cannot accept bows from others." And in the *Great Scripture on the Three Thousand Forms of Everyday Behavior for Monks* it says, "If you do not clean yourself after relieving nature, you are committing an offensive act.[10] You cannot truly sit upon a monk's pure cushion, nor can you truly pay homage to the Triple Treasure. Although you may bow, you will have neither happiness nor merit from doing so."

On the basis of these quotations, you should put this matter foremost when you are training in the temple. How can we possibly not want to pay homage to the Triple Treasure, nor to accept the respectful bows of others, nor to bow to them in return? The training halls of the Buddhas and Ancestors undoubtedly had these forms for dignified behavior. Those in the training halls of the Buddhas and Ancestors undoubtedly implemented these forms for dignified behavior. These are not things we force ourselves to do, for they are the words and deeds that arise naturally from the forms of dignified behavior. They are the constant conduct of all Buddhas and the everyday behavior of all Ancestors. And such forms are not limited just to the Buddhas of this world: they are the conduct of Buddhas in all ten directions. They are the conduct of Buddhas in both the Pure Lands and in the besmirched realms of existence. Those folks who are poorly informed fancy that the Buddhas have no forms of dignified behavior for using the lavatory, or they imagine that the forms of dignified behavior for the Buddhas in this world of ordinary beings are not the same as those for the Buddhas in the Pure Lands, but this is not what 'learning the Way of the Buddhas' means. You should realize that 'purity and stain' is clotted blood that has trickled from a corpse: one minute warm, the next minute horribly cold.[11]

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10. An 'offensive act' is a technical term that refers to the category of least serious breaches of monastic conduct.

11. This is Dōgen's image for a distinction that once was considered the lifeblood of practice

In the fourteenth section of the *Ten Procedures to Be Recited* it says:

> When Rahula, the Buddha's son, was a novice, he took to spending his nights in the Buddha's lavatory. The Buddha, fully aware of what His son was doing, patted Rahula on the head with His right hand and recited this verse:
>
> *My son, it was not to be poor or in want,*
> *Nor to rid yourself of fortune or position,*
> *But simply to seek the Way that you left home,*
> *Which will surely bring hardships enough to bear.*

So, you see, the Buddha's temple had its lavatory too. The form for dignified behavior in the Buddha's lavatory was to wash oneself clean, and the Ancestors, in turn, passed this on to us. The conduct of the Buddhas has still been preserved: to follow the ancient ways is a great joy and something indeed hard to come by. Further, thankfully, the Tathagata gave voice to the Dharma for Rahula whilst in the lavatory. The lavatory was a place fit for the Buddha to turn the Wheel of the Dharma. How to conduct oneself in that training place of the Way is what the Buddhas and Ancestors truly Transmitted.

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In the thirty-fourth chapter of the *Code of Behavior for Members of the Greater Sangha* it says, "The lavatory is not to be placed in the east or the north; it should be situated in the south or the west. Urinals should also be located in this manner." We should go by the directions given here as the proper ones. This is the plan for all the training halls in both China and India, and was actually the way the Tathagata erected them. You should realize that this was not just this one Buddha's way of doing things. It applied to the temples and training halls of the Seven Buddhas,* as well as to the temples and training halls of all the Buddhas. Shakyamuni was not the first to do this; it has been the dignified conduct of all Buddhas. Mistakes will be many, should someone set up a temple or monastery without first understanding this and then attempt to do the practice and training. Such a person will not have prepared for a Buddha's dignified conduct, and the enlightenment of Buddha will not yet have manifested before his very eyes. If you would construct a training hall and establish a temple or a monastery, you will have to do it in accordance with the methods and procedures directly passed on by the

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but which has become frozen and dead through viewing the matter from a discriminatory and judgmental perspective.

Buddhas and Ancestors. Because this is the true Transmission of true heirs, merit and virtues will more and more accumulate. If you are not an heir to the true Transmission of the Buddhas and Ancestors, you do not yet know the Body and Mind of the Buddha's Teachings. If you do not know the Body and Mind of the Buddha's Teachings, you will be unable to clarify what a monk's Buddhist activities are. Now, 'the Great Teacher Shakyamuni Buddha's Teachings being Transmitted throughout the ten quarters' means the Buddha's Body and Mind being made manifest before our very eyes. A proper time for manifesting the Buddha's Body and Mind is when we act in accordance with what has been said here.

This was delivered to the monks at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple, Uji Prefecture, Yamashiro Province, on the twenty-third day of the tenth lunar month in the first year of the En'o era (November 21, 1239).

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On 'The Rippling of a Valley Stream, The Contour of a Mountain'

(Keisei Sanshoku)

Translator's Introduction: Dōgen's discourse on "The Rippling of a Valley Stream, the Contour of a Mountain" is centered on the nature of a kenshō, that is, the experiencing of one's Buddha Nature. In the first half of his discourse, he focuses on the topic of the external condition which serves as a trigger or catalyst for this experience when the disciple is spiritually open and ready for the kenshō to occur. This trigger may be something heard (a valley stream) or seen (springtime blossoms) or felt (the stubbing of a toe). It may be some event occurring in nature, or it may be some gesture or remark that a Master may make upon sensing the 'ripeness' of his disciple. Such a trigger is not the cause of the kenshō occurring, but it is an integral part of the kenshō process. This trigger is a requisite form of external conditions in which someone or something gives voice to the Dharma—that is, gives expression (as, in reality, all things are always doing) to That which is beyond duality—and the trainee, 'hearing' this, makes the connection between the Source of this voicing and his own Original Nature.

The second half of the talk examines various obstacles that may interfere with the kenshō occurring, with emphasis given to the pursuit of personal fame and gain.

The Buddhas and Ancestors have been many indeed. Their deeds are instructive for teaching others the Way to supreme enlightenment. Among those deeds are not a few examples of 'bone-crushing' diligence. For instance, you can draw instruction from the Second Ancestor Eka's 'severing of his arm'.[1] And do not miss the meaning behind the Buddha's action in a previous life when He covered the mud with His long hair.[2] Once each of you has succeeded in 'removing your husk',[3] and you are no longer attached to any prior intellectual

1. 'Cutting off one's arm' is being used metaphorically to refer to giving up one's willfulness at all costs. Such a 'severing' is done by applying Manjushri's Sword of Wise Discernment. Dōgen is not recommending self-mutilation.

2. Shakyamuni Buddha was an ascetic monk then. He spread his long hair over a mud puddle so that the Buddha of that time could cross the mud without staining Himself. This serves as an allusion to the willingness to go to whatever lengths are necessary, however humbling, so that one's Buddha Nature may traverse the Path unsullied. As with the previous example, Dōgen is not encouraging blind imitation of a physical act, but pointing to an understanding of the intention behind the action.

3. Or, in idiomatic English, 'taking your blinders off '.

understanding, the Matter* which had been unclear to you for ever so long will immediately emerge before you. The very 'nowness' of this is beyond anything I know of, beyond anyone's ability to comprehend intellectually, beyond all your expectations, even beyond a Buddha's Eye to catch a glimpse of. So how can it possibly be fathomed by any human speculations?

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In Great Sung China there was a lay Buddhist called Tōba. His family name was So, his official name was Shoku, and his name as an adult was Shisen. He must have been a veritable dragon in the sea of letters, for he had trained under dragon elephants in the ocean of Buddhism.[4] Swimming in the fathomless waters of Buddhism, he would soar up through the cloud banks to plunge once again into the depths of that ocean. Then there came a time when, whilst on a visit to Mount Ro,[5] he was struck by the sound of the valley stream rippling through the night, and he awoke to the Way. He composed the following poem about the experience, which he presented to Meditation Master Jōsō:

The valley stream's rippling is indeed the eloquent
tongue of Buddha:
The mountain's contour is not other than that of the
body of Buddha.
With the coming of night, I heard the eighty-four
thousand songs,[6]
But with the rising of the sun, how am I ever to offer
them to you?

Upon his presenting this poem to Meditation Master Jōsō, the Master said in approval, "Just so!" Master Jōsō is Meditation Master Shōkaku Jōsō, who was the Dharma heir of Meditation Master Ōryū Enan, who, in turn, was the Dharma heir of Meditation Master Jimyō Soen.

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* See *Glossary*.

4. As used here, the word 'dragon' by itself refers to someone markedly brilliant. The term 'dragon elephant' is explained in the *Glossary.*

5. The home of many notable literary figures of his day.

6. In Buddhism, 'eighty-four thousand' represents both the number of atoms in a human body and the number of forms of illumination assumed by Amitabha Buddha, the Buddha of Immeasurable Light.

There was also a time when layman Tōba had a spiritual interview with the Great Priest Ryōgen Butchin. The latter, investing Tōba with the Buddha seal,* gave him a monk's Dharma robe and the Buddhist Precepts, among other things. Layman Tōba, from then on, trained in the Way whilst wrapped in the kesa.* Out of respect and reverence, Tōba presented Butchin with a priceless jeweled sash. People at the time commented that this was not something that an ordinary, everyday person would possibly think of doing.

The situation was such that Tōba's awakening to the Way upon hearing the valley stream was, undoubtedly, due partly to the condition of its sound flowing through the night. How sad that so many countless times the voicing of the Dharma by the manifest body of Buddha has escaped our notice. What, moreover, do you see when you view the contour of a mountain, or hear when you listen to the sound of the valley stream? Is it a single phrase you hear, or half a phrase, or the whole eighty-four thousand songs?

What a pity that Its sound and form lie within the landscape, unseen. And how glad we will be for the occasion and conditions when It reveals Itself in the landscape! 'His giving tongue to' is never remiss, for how can the contours of His Body be subject to a temporal existence and dissolution? Nevertheless, when It comes into sight, we learn how very near It has always been: when It is lying unseen, how are we to learn how near It really is? Are Its sound and form the whole of It or are they but half of It? In past springs and autumns, Tōba had not seen or heard the Water. Then, on the occasion of a single night, he was just able to see the Mountain and hear the rippling of Its stream. Now you bodhisattvas* training in the Way, too, should open wide the gate to your training and enter by means of the verse, "That which flows is the Mountain: That which does not flow is the Water."

On the day preceding the night that this layman Tōba awoke to the Way, he had gone to Meditation Master Shōkaku Jōsō to ask him about the kōan* story concerning the non-sentient giving voice to the Dharma.[7] Although he had not yet directly understood what the Master meant when he spoke on that occasion of 'turning oneself around', nevertheless, upon his hearing the rippling of the valley stream, it was as though the swirling waters had struck the very heavens. Thus it was that the sound of the stream now startled Tōba. But was it the voice of the stream or was it what had poured forth from his Master Jōsō's lips? Perhaps Jōsō's comment that the Non-sentient gives voice to the Dharma had not yet ceased to

7. Here, 'non-sentient' carries a double meaning. On one level it refers to anything that is not a sentient being and, on another level, to That which transcends the duality of sentient and non-sentient.

reverberate in Tōba, and, unbeknownst to Tōba, had intermingled with the sound of the stream's rippling through the night. Who will say, upon discerning It, that It is 'a whole dipperful', or who will say, upon flowing into It, that It is 'a whole oceanful'? In short, was it layman Tōba who awakened to the Way or was it the landscape that awakened to the Way? What person is clear of eye and yet fails to quickly spot His eloquent tongue and His immaculate body?

As another example, at one time Meditation Master Kyōgen Chikan was training at Mount Daii in the community of Isan Reiyū. Isan said to him, "You are a learned scholar of considerable intelligence. So, without having to rely on what you have memorized from commentaries, surely you should be able to explain for me in your own words what the phrase 'before "father" and "mother" were born'* means."

However many times he tried, Kyōgen was unable to do so. Deeply ashamed of himself, he consulted all the Scripture books and their commentaries that he had amassed over the years, but he was still left at wit's end. Finally, he took a torch and burned the writings he had previously collected, saying, "A rice cake in a painting will never satisfy one's hunger! I swear that I will no longer crave after the Buddha's Teachings in this lifetime, but will just be a kitchen monk who serves up the rice and gruel."

And so he served up the rice and gruel as the months and years went by. 'The monk who serves up the rice and gruel' refers to one who serves meals to his fellow monks. It is like the person in our country who dishes out the food. After having worked in this way for many years, he remarked to Isan, "Dunce that I am, I am still in the dark, unable to find the words to speak. O Reverend Monk, please say something to help me." Isan responded, "It is not that I refuse to say anything for your sake, but I fear that later on you would come to resent me for it."

And so, several more years passed, and Kyōgen went to visit the site where the National Teacher Echū had lived. Arriving at Mount Butō, he collected up grass and built himself a hermit's hut on the spot where the National Teacher's hermitage had stood. He planted some bamboo, which served as his sole companion. One day, whilst intent on sweeping his walkway clean, he accidentally sent a piece of tile flying, which hit the bamboo. Upon hearing the knocking sound it made, he suddenly had a great awakening. He bathed himself and, abstaining from anything physical or mental that might be sullying, he turned in the direction of Mount Daii to offer incense and reverently bow. Then, as though facing Isan himself, he said, "O Great Monk Isan, if long ago you had said something to me

for my sake, how would I now have had this experience? My indebtedness to you is so deep that it surpasses even that which I owe to my parents." He ended by composing the following poem:

At one blow, I have forgotten all that I had learned with my head.
Truly, I myself am no longer the one in control.

Breaking out in a smile, I make my way along the Old Path,
Neither looking down in moments of despair
Nor leaving behind, here and there, traces of where I have been.
Only a dignified manner remains, which lies beyond anything heard or seen.

Those everywhere who have realized the Way,
All as one, say it is the moment supreme.

When he presented this poem to Isan, the latter said, "This disciple has struck Home."

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As still another example, Meditation Master Reiun Shigon had trained and practiced for thirty years. Then one day, whilst 'swimming about', visiting mountain monasteries,[8] he took a rest at the foot of a mountain, when in the distance he spied a village. It was spring at the time, and, glimpsing the peach blossoms in bloom there, he suddenly awoke to the Way. Composing a poem, he presented it to Isan:

Thirty years I sought for Him, the Good Friend with His Sword of Wisdom:
For so many rounds have the leaves fallen and the branches burst anew with blooms!
But just one glance at those peach blossoms
And straightaway—at that very moment—I arrived, never again to be in doubt.

8. It was customary at the time for monks who had not yet had a kenshō to visit other monasteries for the summer retreat.

Isan said, "The person who enters the Truth by way of some external condition is not likely to ever retreat from It or lose It." Thereupon, he gave his approval to Reiun.

Is there anyone who has not entered by way of some external condition? Is there anyone who, once having entered, would retreat from this Place, or lose It? This is not something that applies to Reiun and Reiun alone. Ultimately he inherited the Dharma from Isan. Were it not that the contour of the mountain is the Pure Body of Buddha, how could a thing like this possibly happen?

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> Also, Meditation Master Chōsa Keishin was asked by a certain monk, "How is it possible to change the great earth with its mountains and rivers so that we make it return to the True Self?"
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> The Master responded, "No, the question is, 'How is it possible to change ourselves so that we make It return to the great earth with its mountains and rivers?'"

What is being said here is that the True Self is, in Its own right, the True Self. Even though we speak of the Self as being 'the great earth with its mountains and rivers', this is not something that should delude us as to what is returned to.

> Similarly, the monk Egaku, who was a Dharma descendant of Nangaku, was once asked by Shison, a lecturer in the scholastic tradition, "How is it possible for one's Original Nature, which is immaculate, to all at once produce something as polluted as the great earth with its mountains and rivers?"
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> The monk pointed out in response, "Since our Original Nature is immaculate, how does It, all at once, produce the Great Earth with Its mountains and rivers?"

We must realize here that we are not to make the mistake of taking 'the Great Earth with Its mountains and rivers in their immaculate Original Nature' to be the great earth with its mountains and rivers. Yet, scholars who simply take Scriptures literally have never even dreamt of this, and consequently do not comprehend what 'the Great Earth with Its mountains and rivers' signifies.

We must understand that were Original Nature not the contour of a mountain and the rippling of a valley stream, then Shakyamuni would not have begun His voicing of the Dharma by holding a flower aloft, nor would Eka's reaching the Very Marrow of what Bodhidharma was teaching have come about. Because of the merit that comes to fruition in the rippling of a stream and the contour of a mountain, the great earth and its sentient beings simultaneously realize the Way,

and there are Buddhas, such as Shakyamuni, who awaken to the Way upon seeing a morning star. Flesh-and-blood human beings like these are Masters of bygone days whose determination to seek the Dharma was profound indeed.

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We humans today should, by all means, consider following in Their footsteps. And, likewise, we of today should give rise to a similar determination by pursuing genuine training, which is in no wise connected with personal fame or gain. In recent times, in far-flung places like Japan, people who are truly searching for the Buddha's Teachings are rare. It is not that such persons do not exist, but that it is difficult to encounter them.

Occasionally, there are some who appear to leave home to become monks, letting go of the mundane, but too many of them only use the Buddha's Way as a bridge to fame and gain, sad to say. It is such a pity for them to waste their days and nights without regret, vainly training in pursuit of such dark and wayward goals. When will come the time that they abandon such things and realize the Way? Even should they meet a genuine teacher, they probably would not be fond of this 'True Dragon'. Former Buddhas would say of such people that they are persons to be pitied, since such a response is due simply to their attitude of mind, which has arisen from bad karmic roots planted in some previous life of theirs. Although they have been born as a human being, they do not have the determination to seek the Dharma for Its own sake. As a result, when they encounter true Teaching, they are suspicious of the True Dragon. When they meet genuine Dharma, they are repelled by It. Since they have never lived—neither in body and mind, nor in bones and flesh—in accordance with the Dharma, they are not suited to It, nor do they accept and apply It.

For a long time now, Masters and disciples in our Ancestral Tradition have continued to pass on the Dharma as they had received It. But nowadays, to speak of 'the mind that seeks enlightenment' resembles talking about some dream dreamt long ago. How sad not to know of, or ever see, the precious ore that lies buried in a mountain of treasure, but how much more sad when it is the mother lode of the Dharma!

Once you have given rise to the intention to seek enlightenment, even though you are spinning about through the six worlds* of existence, being born through any of the four modes of birth, the very causes and conditions of your spinning will become your heartfelt practice of enlightenment. Accordingly, even though you have spent your past days and nights in vain pursuits, you should make the following vow while you are still in this present life:

> I pray that I and all sentient beings, from this life through all future lives, will ever be able to hear the True Teachings. Once I have heard the True Dharma, I will not harbor doubts about It or fail to trust in It. Right at the time when I encounter the True Dharma, I will let go of the whole world and embrace the Buddha's Teachings. Then, together with all sentient beings on the great earth, may we fulfill the Way.

If you make your vow in this manner, it will, of itself, be a cause for your enlightenment-seeking mind to arise. Never neglect the attitude of mind behind this vow.

Further, this land of Japan is a distant place separated from others by vast seas. The hearts of its people are befuddled in the extreme. From the distant past, it has not been common for saintly persons or those naturally gifted with good sense to be born here, to say nothing of the scarcity of true students of the Way. When the fellow who knows nothing of the heart that seeks the Way is told of this Way-seeking heart, he turns a deaf ear to this good instruction. As a result, he does not reflect upon himself and harbors resentment towards others.

In short, when you put into practice your intention to seek enlightenment, you should not concern yourself with letting worldly people know that you have given rise to the enlightenment-seeking mind and are practicing the Way. Rather, you should conduct yourself so that they may not know it; even more, you should not speak of it openly. People today who seek Truth are rare; as a result, the majority do not engage themselves in spiritual practice and have not awakened in their hearts. Desirous of praise from others, they seek for someone who will tell them how integrated their practice and understanding are. This is just what 'being deluded within delusion' means. You should immediately toss out such ridiculous notions.

When training in the Way, the most difficult thing to experience is the mental attitude of the True Dharma. That attitude of mind is something that Buddhas come to Transmit to each Other. We call this the mutual Transmission of a Buddha's Light and of a Buddha's Heart and Mind.

From the time when the Tathagata was in the world up to this very day, the number of fellows who appear to be paying heed to training in the Way with the sole purpose of seeking personal fame and gain have been many. But even in such cases, if they encounter the instructions of a genuine Master, turn themselves around, and seek the True Dharma, they will naturally realize the Way. You who are now training in the Way today need to know that a spiritual illness such as this seeking after fame and gain exists. It can occur, for instance, in those with a

beginner's attitude of mind who have just begun to train, as well as in those, whether Transmitted or not, who have trained and practiced for a long time.

There will be those who dote on what has passed and try to mimic that, and there may even be demons who slander those above them and refuse to learn from them. Do not be attracted to either type or feel resentment towards either. Why do I say not to feel sorry for them or resent them? Because it is said that people who recognize the three poisons of greed, hatred, and delusion to be what they are, are rare enough, so there is no need to feel resentment towards those who do not. Even more importantly, you should not lose sight of the intention that arose when you first took delight in seeking the Way of the Buddhas. It is said that when we first give rise to this intention, we are not seeking the Dharma so that others will praise us, but are discarding thoughts of fame and gain. Without seeking fame or gain, we should simply be persons who hold to the true course of realizing the Way, never concerning ourselves with expectations of recognition or support from rulers or other officials.

Even though this is the ideal, there are some people today who, alas, are devoid of any fundamental spiritual aspirations, having no spiritual goal that they seek, and are not the least concerned over their delusive entanglements with both ordinary people and those in lofty positions. On the other hand, there are some befuddled people who once did have a heart intent on the Way, but have all too quickly forgotten about their original intention and have fallen into error, anticipating offerings from ordinary people and those in lofty positions, which offerings they joyfully consider to be merit accruing to them from the Buddha's Teachings. If they secure the confidence of some ruler or official, they fancy that they have succeeded in seeing what our Path is. This is one devil of an impediment to training in the Way. Even though you must not lose sight of the heart filled with pity for all beings, you must not delight in forming entangling relationships with them. Look! The Buddha once deigned to express it with His golden words, "Even in the present day, the Tathagata is greatly vilified and envied." Those who are foolish do not recognize what is bright and wise, which is why little brutes envy and resent great saints.

As a further example, our Ancestral Master from Western India, Bodhidharma, underwent great torments for the sake of non-Buddhists, shravakas,* pratyekabuddhas,* rulers, and the like. This was not because the paths of non-Buddhists were superior, nor because of some lack of deference to the Ancestral Master. After this First Ancestor came from the West, he hung up his traveling staff on Mount Sūzan at Shōrin-ji Temple when he discovered that neither Emperor Wu of Liang nor the king of Wei understood what the spirit of Buddhism is. About that

time, there were two veritable dogs, Bodhiruchi and Vinaya Master Kōtō.[9] Fearing that Bodhidharma might hinder the spread of their false reputations and wicked influences among honest people, they conspired against him, just as if they had looked up at the sun and tried to put it into eclipse. They were even more excessive in their behavior than Devadatta was when the Buddha was alive.[10] The fame and gain that they, alas, so deeply doted on was even more repellent to Bodhidharma than excrement and filth. The reason for such things is not that the strength of the Buddha's Dharma is less than ideal: just be aware that there are dogs who bark at good people. Do not worry about barking dogs and do not resent them. Give rise to the wish to offer them guidance by providing them with the following Teaching, "Although you are, undoubtedly, beasts, you should still give rise to the intention to realize enlightenment." A former sage has called these two 'beasts with human faces'.

There is also that type of 'beast' who gives his confidence and support. As the former Buddha Shakyamuni said, "Do not seek to be an intimate of kings or princes, ministers or officials, brahmans or lay Buddhists."[11] Truly, this is a principle of practice which those who would train in the Buddha's Way should not forget. The meritorious fruits of a bodhisattva's first beginning to train will pile up as he continues on.

Further, ever since ancient times, the skeptical Indra, Lord of Heaven, has come to test the intentions of practitioners, as has Mara the Tempter come to disturb and obstruct the practitioner's training in the Way. All instances of this have

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9. During that time, there were two Indian scholars named Bodhiruchi: one was an eminent translator of Scriptures and the other was a scholar who was envious of Bodhidharma. It is the latter Bodhiruci who is referred to here. The Chinese Vinaya Master Kōtō was a translator and writer of Scriptural commentaries. Both tried to discredit Bodhidharma's focus on meditation practice, and it is said that both attempted to poison him.

   The *Vinaya* is the section of the Buddhist canon containing the rules of monastic discipline. Dōgen is not advocating that one should not follow the Teachings of this work, but rather that one should not become rule-bound simply for the sake of rules due to a lack of spiritual understanding of their purpose and aim.

10. Devadatta was Shakyamuni Buddha's cousin and His disciple. While a senior monk, he caused a schism in the assembly, with five hundred novices following him. Although maintaining that he was still Shakyamuni's disciple, he even attempted, unsuccessfully, to kill Shakyamuni.

11. Context implies that the confidence and support in this instance derive from a desire to gain control over or manipulate a monk. As a preventative, monks are instructed not to seek out or encourage close, emotionally binding personal relationships with lay people, which would be inviting entanglements.

occurred when someone has not let go of hopes for fame and gain. When great compassion is deep within you, and your wish to spiritually aid sentient beings everywhere is well seasoned, there are no such obstructions. Then your training and practice will flower; they will be strong enough to win the citizenry over and will seem to permeate the course of events. At such periods in time, you should scrutinize yourself all the more for signs of attraction to fame and gain. Do not close your eyes to these and doze off. People who are confused by their follies rejoice in this flowering, like foolish dogs gnawing on dried-out bones. The wise and saintly treat this flowering with a repulsion such as that which the worldly have for excrement and filth.[12]

In general, the discriminatory disposition of the beginner's mind is incapable of measuring the Buddha's Way: though it may try to sound Its depths, it does not touch them. But this does not mean that, because one cannot fully fathom It with a beginner's mind, one is incapable of arriving at the farthest reaches of Its realm. That which penetrates to the deepest halls of this region is not the shallow cognitive functions of a beginner's mind. Simply, you should walk the Path that former saints have trod. At such a time as this, in order to visit a Master and inquire into the Way, you may have to scale mountains with a ladder and cross vast seas in a rowboat.[13] And, while you are seeking out a teacher to guide you or praying for a good friend to give you instruction, such a one may fall from the heavens or well up from the earth. When, with a beginner's mind, you encounter a teacher and let him guide you, he will let you hear him speak of things sentient and non-sentient, and you will hear of things pertaining to your body and to your mind. Even though hearing with one's ears is daily fare, to 'hear' sound with the eye is indeed something that seems impossible, but is not.[14] When you 'see Buddha', you will see Buddha in self and others: you will see great Buddhas and small Buddhas. Do not be startled or frightened by a great Buddha: do not be skeptical of, or troubled by, a small Buddha. What we call 'great Buddhas and small Buddhas' are Those whom, for the time being, we recognize as the contour of a mountain and the rippling of a valley stream. Here can be found the eloquent tongue and the eighty-four thousand songs. By offering these songs as our voicing of the Dharma, we free ourselves from the mundane. When we see through, piercing to the Truth, we root out the self. This is why the proverb says, "The higher, the harder." And, as my

12. That is, when Buddhism prospers and flourishes either within oneself or around oneself, one should not get caught up in or attached to either.

13. Allusions to the diligent effort one may be called on to make when training in the Way.

14. As, for example, when the 'eye' is the Eye of Wise Discernment.

former teacher and Buddha put it, "Boundless as the heavens, pervasive as water." And there is the restrained demeanor of the pine tree in spring, and there is the radiant beauty of chrysanthemums in autumn: within themselves, just as they are, lies the Truth.

When a good friend reaches this region, he will be a great teacher to gods and men. If he has not yet reached this region and tries to give instruction to people indiscriminately, he will be a great thief of gods and men. Unaware of the springtime pine, blind to the autumnal chrysanthemums, what will he have as fodder for his teaching? How will he help others to sever their karmic roots?

Further, if you are lazy or negligent in mind or body, if you are lacking in faith and trust, you should, in all devotion and sincerity, admit this openly before the Buddhas and repent your actions. When we do this, the strength from the meritorious fruits of repenting before the Buddhas will rescue and cleanse us. These meritorious fruits are the result of our being unencumbered as we live in pure trust and foster an attitude of devotion. Once we have manifested pure trust, both we ourselves and others alike turn around. The benefits of this will spread far and wide, encompassing both the sentient and the non-sentient. The meaning of this repentance can be expressed as follows:

> Even though the wicked deeds that I have done in the past have piled up deep and cause obstructions to my training in the Way, I pray that all the Buddhas and Ancestors who have realized the Truth in accordance with the Buddha's Way will have pity on me, help me let go of my karmic entanglements, and help me dissipate any impediments to training in the Way. May They help the Gateway to the inexhaustible Dharma ceaselessly pour forth Its meritorious fruits to permeate the whole universe, so that the compassionate pity of the Teachings will spread to all of us.

Keep in mind, we are as the Buddhas and Ancestors were in the ancient past: the Buddhas and Ancestors are what we will be in the future. When we look up to the Buddhas and Ancestors, we and They are but one single Buddha Ancestor. When we observe the arising of our resolve, it is but one and the same resolute Heart as Theirs. 'Making our compassionate pity permeate every nook and cranny' means knowing when to apply it and when to let go of it. This is why Zen Master Ryūge said, "If you have not yet realized your enlightenment in a past lifetime, by all means realize it now. In this life, ferry this body of yours, which is the product of successive past lives, to the Other Shore. Before the Buddhas of the past had awakened to the Truth, They were just like people today. Once they have completely awakened, people today will be as those Buddhas of the past." You

should take time to study and investigate this principle, for this is what all Buddhas have guaranteed us will take place.

While being mindful in mind and decorous in body, own up to what you have done and openly admit it to Buddha. The power from owning up destroys the roots of what is defiling you. This is the whole body of true training and practice. It is the heart that truly trusts: it is the body of true faith. When you truly train and practice, the voice of valley streams and the appearance of valley streams, the appearance of mountains and the voice of mountains, along with their eighty-four thousand songs, will be unstinting. If you yourself do not prize fame or gain, body or mind, then the valley streams and mountains will, in turn, be unstinting in revealing to you That Which Is. Whether the voice of valley streams and the contour of mountains manifest for you the eighty-four thousand songs or not is, simply, what comes in the darkness of night. On the other hand, should you not yet possess the strength to proclaim valley stream and mountain as Valley Stream and Mountain, who will be able to hear you give forth the valley stream's True Voice or see you take the mountain's True Form?

Given to the assembly of monks at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the fifth day of the summer training period in the second year of the En'o era (May 12, 1240).

Recopied before the summer training period on the anniversary of the Buddha's birth in the first year of the Kangen era (April 28, 1243) in my room in the same temple.

Ejō

Recopied again on the eleventh day of the seventh lunar month in the first year of the Kenji era (August 2, 1275).

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On 'Refrain from All Evil Whatsoever'

(Shoaku Makusa)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse, Dōgen discusses the significance of a poem that appears in Chinese translations of the Pali *Āgama Scriptures,* the earliest known Buddhist Scriptures. Although they are part of the Theravadan tradition, they are nevertheless viewed as fundamental to Mahayana Buddhism. The poem is considered to encapsulate the Precepts, which form the moral basis for the actions of a Buddhist. Although there have been various interpretations of this poem over the centuries, this English translation reflects Dōgen's particular understanding of the Chinese version. After Dōgen has presented the significance of each of the four lines of the poem, he then explores the appropriate attitude of mind towards these Preceptual Teachings by means of a story concerning Haku Rakuten, whom the Japanese have traditionally regarded as the greatest of the Chinese poets.

The Buddha of long ago said in verse:

Refrain from all evil whatsoever,
Uphold and practice all that is good,
And thereby you purify your own intentions:
This is what all Buddhas teach.

These are the Precepts that the Seven Buddhas* and all the Ancestors of our Tradition have held in common. They are passed down from a previous Buddha directly to the next Buddha: They are what a Buddha inherits from a preceding Buddha. This refers not only to the Seven Buddhas, for these Precepts are what all Buddhas teach. You should examine Them with the mind of meditation and thoroughly investigate the principles They voice.

When mention is made of 'the Dharma voiced by the Seven Buddhas', it is doubtless a reference to this Teaching which the Seven Buddhas have given voice to. Moreover, what is passed on and what is inherited is precisely what is being communicated here through this Scriptural verse. It is 'what all Buddhas teach'. It is what the hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhas have been instructed in, what They have practiced, and what They have personally come to realize.

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* See *Glossary.*

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The 'all evil' of which we are now speaking has the quality of 'being evil' among the three qualities of 'being good', 'being evil', and 'being neutral'.[1] This quality of 'being evil' is something that does not arise and perish, as thoughts and things do. Although the qualities of 'being good' and 'being neutral' are also beyond arising, as well as being without stain and bearing the characteristics of the Truth, these three qualities, in each instance, are quite diverse in form and character.

'All evil' is not exactly the same as what is considered wrong among us in the monastic community or among those in the mundane world, nor is it exactly the same as what was thought of as evil in the past or what is thought to be so in the present. And it is not exactly the same as what is considered evil among the lofty or among ordinary, everyday human beings. And vast indeed is the difference between the way that good, evil, and neutral are spoken of in Buddhism and the way they are spoken of in the world of ordinary, everyday people. What is seen as good and what is seen as evil depend on the times, but time itself is neither good nor evil. What is good and what is evil depend on what thoughts and things they give rise to, but whatever arises is likewise inherently neither good nor evil. To the extent that thoughts or things are alike, they partake of good alike, and to the extent that they are alike, they partake of evil alike.

Nevertheless, while we are pursuing our study of That which is 'absolute, supreme enlightenment', while we are listening to instruction on It, while we are training and practicing until we personally experience the fruits of realizing It, It seems something profound, something remote, something mysterious. We hear of this peerless enlightenment from our good spiritual friends and we learn of It from Scriptures. And the first thing we hear is, "Refrain from all evil whatsoever." If you do not hear it said to refrain from all evil whatsoever, it is not the genuine Dharma of Buddha: it will be the preaching of demons. You must understand that to hear "Refrain from all evil whatsoever" <u>is</u> to hear what the genuine Dharma of Buddha is.

This "Refrain from all evil whatsoever" is not something that worldly people are apt to think of before concocting what they are going to do. Only by hearing enlightenment explained to them will they be able to learn of this phrase. When

1. These three qualities refer to the nature of one's intentions and actions, as well as to the karmic consequences these intentions and actions set in motion. When the nature of one's intentions or actions is good, these intentions and actions produce good karmic effects; when evil, evil effects; when neutral, effects that are neither good nor evil.

they hear of it in this way, it will merely be words related to supreme enlightenment. At this time, enlightenment will be for them only a word, and so the word 'enlightenment' is used. But when these people turn themselves around upon hearing supreme enlightenment being talked about, they will wish to refrain from all evil whatsoever, and they will act to refrain from all evil whatsoever. Once they have arrived at the point where they are no longer doing all manner of evil, the strength from their training and practice will immediately manifest itself before their very eyes. This blossoming of strength will extend beyond all places, all worlds, all times, all things. And the measuring of it will take 'refraining' as its yardstick.

Those who have arrived at this point in time may reside in some place where all manner of evil is going on, or they may be traveling back and forth there, or they may be confronted with conditions where all manner of evil actions may be going on, yet they do not perform such evil actions themselves because they are clearly manifesting the strength from their self-restraint. They do not speak of evil actions as, in and of themselves, evil actions, for there is no such thing as a predestined 'tool for evil'. At such a point in time, the principle that evil does not break a person will be understood: the principle that a person does not defeat evil will be crystal clear.

Rouse your heart and mind fully and do your training and practice, for when you rouse your heart and mind to do the training and practice, you will have already realized eight- or nine-tenths of the Way. Before you know it, you will have 'refraining' always in the back of your mind. Whether you pay heed to your own handling of mind and body whilst doing your training and practice, or pay heed to someone else's handling of mind and body whilst they are doing their training and practice, the strength from your practice and training with the four elements and the five skandhas* will instantly manifest before your very eyes. At such a time, the four elements and the five skandhas will not sully you; even with the four elements and the five skandhas being just as they are at the present time, your training and practice can go on. The strength from the four elements and the five skandhas, just as they are in our present training and practice, has been brought about through our previous training and practice with the four elements and the five skandhas.

Moreover, when we train and practice upon the great earth with its mountains and rivers, and beneath the sun, moon, and stars, then the great earth with its mountains and rivers, as well as the sun, moon, and stars, will help us to train ourselves and to do the practice. It is not a matter of being clear-eyed at one time: it is having your Eye open at all times. Because the Buddhas and Ancestors were clear-eyed, with Their Eye open at all times, It helped Them to do the training

and practice, just as It helped Them to hear and heed what the Scriptures teach and to bring Their spiritual certainty to fruition. Because the Buddhas and Ancestors have never let the Scriptural teachings, Their practice, or Their certainty be sullied, these things have never stood in the way of any Buddha or Ancestor. This is why, in the training and practice of Buddhas and Ancestors, there are no Buddhas or Ancestors who have avoided or turned away from these three aspects or ever would, be it in the past, present, or future. At the time when a sentient being 'becomes' a Buddha or an Ancestor, the Buddhas and Ancestors that have existed previously do not hinder or act as obstacles to Him or Her. Even so, we must consider carefully the principle of 'becoming a Buddha' as we walk, stand, sit, or recline throughout the twenty-four hours of a day. Becoming a Buddha or Ancestor does not tear a sentient being to bits, or rob him of anything, or deprive him of something. It is simply his letting go.

The karmic* consequences of our good and bad actions are what we are training with. That is, we try not to set karmic consequences into motion or not to stir things up. There is a time when karmic consequences are what cause us to do the training and practice. Once the true face of our karma has been made clear to us, then we understand what 'refraining' really means, for this refraining is what Buddha Nature is: it is being impermanent, it is being subject to causality, and it is being free, because it is letting go. When we study the matter in this manner, we will bring about a state where we will completely refrain from all evil. To actualize this, we are helped by focusing on refraining from all evil until we succeed in penetrating to its heart, which is our sitting in meditation until we are able to sever ourselves from what is evil.

When we have actualized "Refrain from all evil whatsoever" from beginning to end, then, at such a point in time, there is just refraining, since evil is not something that arises from karmic causes and conditions. And since evil is not something that disappears along with karmic causes and conditions, there is just refraining, simply that. Were all evils alike, then all physical and mental things would be alike. If you suppose that evils arise due to some karmic cause or condition and do not see that such a cause or condition is, in itself, 'something not to be done', you are folks to be pitied. Just as the seed of Buddhahood comes along with the arising of co-existing conditions, so co-existing conditions will come along with the appearance of the seed of Buddhahood.

It is not that there are no evils: it is only that there are things that one should not do. It is not that there <u>are</u> evils: it is only that there are things that one should not do. It is not that evils are lacking in form: it is simply that they are things not to be done. It is not that evils have some particular form: simply they are things not to be done. Evils are not 'things that one should not do': they are simply things one

does not do. For instance, it is not a matter of whether the springtime pine 'has existence' or 'does not have existence': the pine tree is simply a thing that we do not invent. It is not that the autumn chrysanthemum 'exists' or 'does not exist': this flower is something that we have not fabricated. Whether Buddhas exist or do not exist, there are things we do not do. Whether or not there is a round temple pillar, or a stone lantern, or a ceremonial hossu, or a traveling staff,[2] there are things we do not do. It is not a matter of whether we have existence or not: it is a matter of refraining from things not to be done.

Our studying in this way will be our spiritual question manifesting right in front of us. Since it is a manifestation of our spiritual question, we should meditate on this from the perspectives of both the host and the guest. As regards what you have already done, to have done what you should not have done will create remorse in you. Even so, do not evade such feelings, since facing them will, in turn, prove to be a strength for you, a strength that arises from your training in refraining. Accordingly, should you head off in the direction of thinking, "If it is something I should not do, I ought to give it a try to see what it's like," you will be like someone going north to arrive at the south. To refrain from all evil whatsoever is not just the well looking at the donkey: it is the well looking at the well, the donkey looking at the donkey, the ordinary person looking at the ordinary person, the mountain looking at the mountain.[3] Because the cases spoken of here share a principle which, at bottom, is in accord with each of them, they all involve refraining from all evil.

The true Dharma Body of the Buddha
Is unbounded, like empty space.
It reveals Its form in accordance with an object,
Like the moon reflected in water.

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2. These four items are associated with a Meditation Master, one who serves as the fundamental support for his or her temple or monastery, who is a guiding light for his or her disciples, who pours forth the Water of the Spirit for their spiritual benefit, and who is willing to travel anywhere literally and figuratively to help sentient beings arrive at the Other Shore.

3. An allusion to a remark by Meditation Master Sōzan Honjaku that when a donkey looks into the well, the well looks at the donkey. The donkey here refers to the stubborn mind of the trainee (the guest position), and the well to That which he looks into in training. While he is looking into this Well, the Well (the host position) is 'looking at' the donkey. It is also the ordinary mind looking at the ordinary mind, and it is the mind in meditation looking at the mind of meditation.

Because this refraining is done in accordance with what an object is, it is a refraining that takes various forms. It resembles empty space, which is the same wherever you point, right or left. It is like the moon in water: the moon is not hampered by the water. Furthermore, these cases of refraining will, beyond doubt, manifest before your very eyes.

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"Uphold and practice all that is good." This 'all that is good' refers to the quality of 'being good' among the three qualities. Although 'all that is good' resides within the quality of 'being good', it does not mean that what is good already exists somewhere and is waiting for someone to put it into operation. At the very moment when someone does good, nothing but good comes forth. Although the myriad expressions of goodness are without an outer form, when good is done, it attracts goodness faster than a magnet attracts iron. Its strength surpasses that of the Great Storming Wind.[4] Even the strength amassed by the karma from the great earth with its mountains and rivers, as well as from the world with its nations and countries, will never hinder the accumulating of good.

Even so, what is good depends on what 'world' you are talking about, for it will not always be perceived as being the same thing, since people consider what 'good' is from their own perspective. It is also like this when Buddhas give voice to the Dharma in the three temporal worlds. What They give voice to is the same, but how It was voiced when Each was in the world has depended on the times. Even though Their length of life and the number of Buddhas may vary over time, what They all give voice to is the Teaching of non-discriminatory thinking.

This is why what is seen to be good from the perspective of practicing in faith and what is seen to be good from the perspective of practicing in accordance with the Dharma vary so widely, yet they are not separate Teachings.[5] For instance,

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4. This wind, whose raging is capable of destroying all in its path, arises beyond the Iron Mountains which surround and protect Mount Sumeru. This is an allusion to the worst, most powerful form of karmic consequence which, like a storm, is capable of destroying ordinary human beings physically and mentally. However, the Iron Mountains (when understood as a metaphor for Buddhist practitioners sitting unmoved in their meditation) form a protective spiritual barrier against such a destructive force for the trainee who is meditating 'atop Mount Sumeru'.

5. That is, what is good from the perspective of meditation (sitting in complete faith and trust) and the good which is derived from applying what the Buddha taught in the form of the Precepts may sometimes superficially appear to be different, but when meditation and practice are properly undertaken, they are seen to be all one identical Dharma.

it is like the situation of a shravaka's holding to the Precepts being a breaking of the Precepts in a bodhisattva.[6]

'All that is good' is independent of what karmically arises and what karmically undergoes dissolution. 'All that is good' is synonymous with 'all thoughts and things', yet all such things are not necessarily good. Since the cycles of karmic conditions, that which arises and ceases with them, and 'all good' are alike in having a beginning, so they will also have their ending. Although 'all good' is what we uphold and practice, since it is not of the self, it is not known via the self; since it is not of others, it is not known via others. When speaking of consciousness of self and other, there is a self and an other in what is known; there is a self and an other in what is seen. Hence, each and every Eye that has opened to the Truth, when activated, will have Its Sun and Its Moon: this is what is meant by 'upholding and putting into practice'.

At the very moment of our upholding and practicing, there will be the spiritual question arising before our eyes. Even so, it will not be the first time that it has manifested nor will the question remain indefinitely, continuing on, nor can we possibly say that it is the fundamental practice.

Although, as I have said, the doing of what is good is what we uphold and practice, it is not something to be speculated upon or intellectually analyzed. Even though the upholding and practicing of which I now speak are, indeed, the activities of the Eye That has opened to the Truth, it is not a subject for speculation. It is not something that has manifested for the purpose of our speculating on the Dharma. The conclusions drawn by the opened Eye will not be the same as those drawn by other things.

'All that is good' does not depend on something having existence or not having existence, on something having form or being devoid of form, and so forth. It is simply what is upheld and practiced. No matter where it manifests, no matter when it manifests, it is what we uphold and practice, without fail. This adherence and practice will manifest what is good, without fail. Even though our adherence and practice are what manifest because of our spiritual question, 'all that is good' lies beyond birth, beyond annihilation, beyond any karmic conditions. The same

6. That is, someone who is new to training and has just begun to try to live in accordance with the Precepts (that is, a 'shravaka') may need to hold closely to the literal meaning of them. However, in someone whose training and practice have advanced to the point where he or she is naturally acting from the Precepts as their very blood and bones (that is, a 'bodhisattva'), this 'holding on tightly' is precisely what could work against the intent of the Precepts if the trainee were to apply them as a rigid yardstick, thereby opening the door to judgmentalism.

holds true for our entering into adherence and practice, our persisting in them, our departing from them, and so forth. When, from among all of our acts, even a single good act is upheld and practiced, the goodness of every single thing in its totality—all of which together form the ground of reality—is upheld and put into practice.

The causes and effects of this goodness have, likewise, sprung from our spiritual question, which we have actualized by our adherence to and practice of what is good. Although it is not a matter of cause necessarily preceding effect, both cause and effect will be fully perfected. When the causes are alike, the thoughts and things they give rise to will be alike: when effects are alike, then it is because the thoughts and things have been alike. Although depending upon the cause we feel effects, it is not a matter of 'before and after', because 'before' and 'after' are merely ways of speaking.

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In the statement, "You purify your own intentions," the 'you' is the 'you' that refrains, the 'purifying' is the purifying by refraining, the 'own' is the 'own' of yourself, the 'intention' is the intention that you have. The 'your own' is the 'your own' that refrains, the 'intention' is the intention to refrain. 'Intention' is 'the intention to uphold and practice', 'to purify' is 'to purify by upholding and practicing', 'your own' is 'your own adherence to practice', the 'you' is the 'you that upholds and practices'. This is why it is said, "This is what all Buddhas teach."

All Buddhas may resemble gods like Ishvara, the Indian creator of the world. Although They have some things in common with Ishvara, all such gods are not Buddhas. They also resemble sovereign, Wheel-turning Lords.* However, it cannot be said that all those holy sovereign lords are Buddhas. We must carefully study the principle enunciated here. Although it seems that there are people who fail to examine what 'all Buddhas' means and thereby create suffering for themselves—and to no good purpose—nevertheless, this is simply suffering from being a sentient being; it has nothing to do with practicing the Way to Buddhahood. 'Refraining from' together with 'upholding and putting into practice' means "Before all the donkey matters have passed, horse matters have already arrived."[7]

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The poet Haku Rakuten of the T'ang dynasty was a lay disciple of Meditation Master Bukkō Nyoman, who was a Dharma heir of Baso. When

7. That is, refraining from evil (which trains the stubborn 'donkey') is not something to be completed before beginning to practice good (putting the willing 'horse' to use.)

Rakuten was governor of Hangchow, he trained under Meditation Master Dōrin of Chōka.

> Rakuten once asked Dōrin, "Just what is the major intention of the Buddha Dharma?"
>
> Dōrin replied, "Refrain from all evil whatsoever; uphold and practice all that is good."
>
> Rakuten remarked, "If that's all there is to it, even a child of three knows how to say that!"
>
> Dōrin replied, "Though a three-year-old child can say it, there are old men in their eighties who still cannot put it into practice."
>
> Upon hearing the matter put this way, Rakuten then bowed in gratitude.

Rakuten was actually a descendant of General Haku. Even so, he was a wizard of a poet, the likes of which is rare in any generation. People refer to him as 'the literary genius of twenty-four generations'. Some have called him a veritable Manjushri;* others, a Maitreya, the Buddha-next-to-come. There is no one who has not heard of his personality; everyone in the world of letters pays court to him. Even so, when it comes to the Buddha's Way, he was a beginner, a youngster. Furthermore, it was as if he had never even dreamt of the meaning of "Refrain from all evil whatsoever; uphold and practice all that is good." Rakuten thought that in saying to refrain from all evil and practice all good, Dōrin was looking at the matter from the perspective of an ordinary, everyday person's way of thinking. Rakuten had failed to grasp the principle of refraining from evil and practicing good—a principle which has existed in Buddhism from ancient-most times and has extended even to the present—nor had he ever even heard of it; consequently he did not tread where the Buddha Dharma is. Lacking the strength of the Buddha Dharma, he said what he did. Even so, when we refrain from evil or practice good as understood by ordinary, everyday people, it will still be our actualizing of 'refraining'.

For the most part, what we first learn about Buddhism from a good spiritual friend and what we bring to fruition through our diligent practice are both one and the same. We describe this as 'learning, from start to finish'. It is also called 'the wondrous cause and the wondrous effect', as well as 'the cause of seeking Buddhahood and the effect of seeking Buddhahood'. Cause and effect in Buddhism should not be confused with such notions as 'effects are totally unrelated to their cause' and 'cause and effect are exactly the same thing', because these notions are not what is meant by 'seeking Buddhahood', and they will not achieve the effect of

seeking Buddhahood. Because Dōrin enunciated this principle, he 'possessed' the Buddha Dharma.

Were evil to pile upon evil and spread throughout the whole world, absorbing everything into its mass, 'emancipation through refraining' would still hold true. Since all that is good is already good—beginning, middle, and end—the nature, characteristics, form, and strength of upholding and practicing it will likewise be good. Rakuten had never walked in such footsteps, which is why he said, "Even a child of three knows how to say that!" He said this because he was lacking in the strength to realize the Way. Poor, pitiful Rakuten, why did you say such a thing?

Since Rakuten had not yet got wind of what Buddhism is really about, it is unlikely that he was truly acquainted with any three-year-olds or with what such a child is naturally capable of. If someone can truly understand a three-year-old, he will surely know all the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds. If someone does not yet know all the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds, how will he be able to understand a three-year-old? Do not imagine that you understand such a child just because you have met one face-to-face. Do not think that you do not know such a child just because you have not met one face-to-face. He who knows but a single mote of dust knows the whole world: he who fully comprehends one thing comprehends all the myriad things that comprise the universe. He who fails to comprehend all the myriad things will not comprehend even one of them. When someone has fully trained himself in this principle of comprehending and has reached full comprehension, he will not only see the myriad things that comprise the universe but will also see each one of them. This is why the person who studies one mote of dust will undoubtedly be studying the whole universe. To think that a three-year-old child cannot give voice to the Buddha Dharma or to think that a three-year-old is 'cute' is the height of foolishness. This is because clarifying what birth is and clarifying what death is constitutes the most important matter for a Buddhist monk.

A virtuous elder once said, "When you were born, you were provided with the lion's roar." Being provided with the lion's roar is the meritorious fruit of a Tathagata's turning of the Wheel of the Dharma: it <u>is</u> the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma. And another virtuous elder said, "The coming and going of birth and death is the Real Body of man." Thus it is that clarifying what one's True Body is and possessing the merit from the lion's roar will indeed be the One Great Matter,* and I do not mean that the task is easy or simple. Hence, attempting to clarify what prompts the words and actions of a three-year-old is also the Great Cause for which we train, since it is the same—and yet not the same—as what prompts the words and actions of all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds.

Befuddled Rakuten had never heard what a three-year-old child had to say, and so he had never questioned himself as to what the Great Matter was. Instead, he made the kind of remark that he did. He did not hear what Dōrin was voicing, though It resounded louder than thunder. In speaking of That which cannot be put into words, Rakuten said, "Even a child of three knows how to say that!" Not only did he not hear the child's lion roar, he also stumbled over the Master's turning of the Wheel of the Dharma.

The Master, out of pity, could not give up on Rakuten and went on to say, "Though a three-year-old child can say it, there are old men in their eighties who still cannot put it into practice." The heart of what he said exists in what a child of three can say, and this we must thoroughly investigate. Also, there is the practice which eighty-year-olds may not be doing, but which we must diligently engage in. What Dōrin has told us is that what the child is capable of saying has been entrusted to us, though it is not a task for a child, and what the old men were not able to practice has been entrusted to us, though it was not the task for old men such as these. In a similar way do we keep the Buddha's Dharma in mind and take It as our foundation, so that we may make It our reason for training.

Delivered to the monks on the evening of the full moon in autumn in the second year of the En'o era (September 2, 1240) at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple, Uji Prefecture, Yamashiro Province.

Transcribed by me on the twenty-seventh day of the third lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (April 17, 1243) in the chief disciple's quarters.

Ejō

10

On 'Respectful Bowing Will Secure for You the Very Marrow of the Way'

(Raihai Tokuzui)

Translator's Introduction: Dōgen's title, *Raihai Tokuzui,* in addition to the translation given above, can also be rendered as 'Respectfully Bowing to Those Who Have Realized the Very Marrow of the Way'. The text is in two parts. The first, delivered to his monks in the spring of 1240, deals with being willing to learn from any who give voice to the Dharma, be they male or female, human or animal, living or dead, animate or inanimate. The second, given in the fall of the same year, specifically addresses various questions on learning from women. For unexplained reasons, the second part was not incorporated in the earlier versions of the *Shōbōgenzō*, but was kept under lock and key in Dōgen's temple, Eihei-ji. This may be due in part to the strong tone of this section, which might be misunderstood as being improperly critical of the practices and attitudes of other monks and other Buddhist traditions. When read in context, however, it is likely that Dōgen's initial talk on gratitude towards those who teach the Dharma, which includes female monks, garnered some negative reactions, and he found it necessary, to borrow his metaphor, to drive the wild foxes of delusion out from their lairs. Hence, his remarks are colored by strong rhetoric, along with his insistent use of the phrase 'and also' to punctuate his remarks, for he seems determined to rid his monks of any and all negative, conventional, non-Buddhist cultural attitudes towards women, including those arising from some long-standing practices within Buddhist communities.

At that time when a person undertakes spiritual training and practice in order to realize *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*—that is, supreme, fully perfected enlightenment—it is extremely difficult to acquire a teacher and guide. Whether that guiding Master has the physical features of a male or a female, or whatever, is irrelevant, but it must be someone who is spiritually outstanding, one who is truly 'with It' here and now.[1] Whether he or she is someone of the past or a present-day person is of no matter; even one who has the nagging manner of a wild fox may prove a good spiritual friend,[2] for this is the countenance of one who has secured

1. To be "'with It' here and now" is an attempt to render the term *immo* when used in its Chinese slang meaning for the condition of persons or things being just what they truly are, without any sense of an existence separate from time and without any sense of a false self.

2. In Zen literature, the epithet 'wild fox (or jackal)' is usually applied to a person who is, as yet, unawakened to the Truth, one who tags after someone who is voicing the Dharma, and

the very Marrow, one who will be a spiritual guide and of benefit to you. This is someone who does not deceive others about cause and effect, and who will treat you, me, and others as spiritual equals.

Once you have encountered a teacher and guide, from then on you should discard your myriad involvements, cease frittering away your time, and devote yourself to diligently practicing the Way. You should do your training and practice, even though you may still be attached to discriminatory thinking; you should do your training and practice, even if you have gone beyond discriminatory thinking; you should do your training and practice, even though you may be half-hearted in the attempt. Study with urgency, as though you were extinguishing a fire on your head: study with joy and hopefulness, as though you were standing on tiptoes.[3] Should you behave in this way, you will not be disturbed by bad-mouthing demons. Besides, the Second Chinese Ancestor's 'cutting off his arm to obtain the Marrow' of his Master's Teachings was a unique deed.[4] I myself had become 'the teacher who has cast off body and mind' before I was fully aware of it.

Securing the Marrow and communicating the Dharma inevitably depend on sincere devotion and a trusting heart. Sincerity and trust do not in the least come from outside ourselves, nor is there any place within from which they emerge. Simply, beyond doubt, those who have done this emphasize the Dharma and play down themselves. These people flee society's world and make the Path their dwelling place. If they were then to pay heed to their false self, prizing that above the Dharma, then the Dharma would not be Transmitted to them and they would never realize the Way. This attitude of prizing the Dharma has not been limited to just a single case, so perhaps we can look at a few cases, without turning to any of the many other instructive examples.

It has been said, "Prizing the Dharma means that if our guide and teacher—be it one who is a supporting pillar* of the temple or a temple lantern,* a Buddha or a wild fox, a hungry ghost* or a divine being—is presenting the Great Dharma and has personally realized Its Marrow, we should respectfully serve him for

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persists in asking nagging and vexatious questions. The term is sometimes applied in a positive sense to a Buddhist Master who keeps at his disciples, urging them in the direction of realizing the Truth through his probing questions.

3. A Buddhist metaphor similar to the English phrase 'walking on air'.

4. 'Cutting off one's arm' is being used metaphorically to refer to giving up one's willfulness at all costs. Such a 'severing' is done by applying Manjushri's Sword of Wise Discernment. Dōgen is not recommending self-mutilation.

* See *Glossary.*

immeasurable eons, with our bodies and minds as a resting place for the Teaching." Obtaining a body and mind comes easily enough—like the rice, hemp, bamboo, and reeds that sprout up throughout the world. What is rare is encountering the Dharma.

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Shakyamuni Buddha once said:

> Should you meet teachers who expound supreme enlightenment, do not inquire into their family pedigree, do not look at their personal appearance, do not despise their shortcomings, do not be concerned with their behavior. Simply, out of respect and esteem for spiritual wisdom, feed such persons daily with hundreds of thousands of ounces of gold, bestow upon them food fit for the gods, make them offerings to meet their needs, and scatter celestial flowers upon them as a reverential offering.[5] Thrice every day—morning, noon, and evening—reverently bow to pay your respects, without letting any feelings of resentment arise in you. When you behave in this way, there will undoubtedly be a way to enlightenment for you. From the time when I first gave rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood, I have trained and practiced in this manner so that today I am realizing supreme enlightenment.

In accordance with this, we should pray that the trees and stones give voice to the Dharma for us: we should hold in our hearts the wish that the fields and the villages also give voice to It. We should ask It of the pillar of a temple: we should have the walls and fences explore It thoroughly with us.

In olden times, there was a celestial emperor, one Shakrendra, who respectfully bowed to a fox as his teacher and asked it about the Dharma, and, according to tradition, he gave it the title of Great Bodhisattva,* without concern whether, due to some deed in a previous life, it was a creature noble or humble.[6] Even so, those foolish and deluded ones who have not paid attention to the Buddha's Teachings express such views as: "I am a great monk, so I need not bow to some youngster's realization of what Dharma is." "I am one who has trained for a long time, so I need not bow to the realization of what Dharma is by someone

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5. What is being described here as 'gold', 'food', 'celestial flowers' and 'reverential offerings' are all metaphors for offerings of gratitude for the teacher's Dharma.

6. Dōgen will relate this story later in Discourse 87: On Taking Refuge in the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha *(Kie Buppōsō Hō)*.

who has come to training late in life." "I have had the office of Teacher of Buddhism bestowed upon me, so I need not bow to one who lacks such a title." "I am a business officer of the temple, so I need not bow to other monks." "I am the monastery's disciplinarian, so I need not bow to a lay person who has realized what Dharma is, be they male or female." "I am one 'thrice wise and ten times saintly',* so I need not bow to female monks or any other such, even though they have realized what Dharma is." "I am one of imperial descent, so I need not bow to ministers, their family members, or any in their retinue who have realized what Dharma is." Since befuddled persons like these have vainly separated themselves from the legitimate Realm of the Buddhas and wandered off onto the pathways of other realms, they neither see nor hear of the Buddha's Way.

Long ago during the T'ang dynasty in China, Great Master Jōshū Shinsai, upon giving rise to the intention to seek the Way, set out on a pilgrimage of Zen monasteries, saying at the time, "Even though it be someone seven years old, if he or she is spiritually my superior, I will ask that person to instruct me. Even though it be someone a hundred years old, if he or she is spiritually less advanced than I, I will give him or her instruction." This old arhat* was bound to bow even when asking for teaching from a seven-year-old! Rare indeed is such an intention, and such was the aim of a Buddha of old.

When a female monk who has realized both the Way and the Dharma becomes head of a temple, male monks who, in seeking the Dharma, wish to train under a Master will join her community, respectfully bowing as they ask her about the Dharma, for she is a splendid model for their training and study. It will be for the trainee like receiving something to drink when he is thirsty.

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In the land of China, Meditation Master Shikan was a highly venerated monk dwelling in Rinzai's temple. The first time Rinzai chanced to see Shikan coming his way, he suddenly grabbed hold of him, whereupon Shikan responded, "As you wish." Releasing him, Rinzai said, "I was just about to give you a thumping." Thereupon, Shikan became Rinzai's disciple.[7]

Later, Shikan left Rinzai's temple and paid a visit to the female Master Massan, whose name means 'the peak of the mountain'.

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7. Shikan's lack of fear plus his respectful attitude of acceptance of Rinzai's method of teaching was the basis for his being immediately accepted by Rinzai as a disciple. A 'thumping' refers to any means Rinzai might employ to arouse a monk from his spiritual torpor.

Massan asked him, "What place have you recently come from?"

Shikan replied, "From Luk'ou."

Massan said, "Why haven't you put a lid on that mouth of yours?"[8]

Shikan was at a loss for words. Accordingly, he respectfully bowed, as one does when performing the ceremony of taking a Master.

Arising, Shikan asked Massan, "What could this mountain peak be?"[9]

Massan replied, "Its apex does not emerge."

Shikan asked, "What kind of person dwells in this mountain?"

Massan answered, "One whose characteristics are neither masculine nor feminine."

Shikan asked, "Why do you not transform yourself into a male?"[10]

Massan replied, "Not being a fox spirit, why should I transform myself into anything?"[11]

Shikan respectfully bowed. Then, giving rise to the intention to seek Buddhahood, he served her as the temple's head gardener for three years.

Later, when Shikan had become head monk of his own temple, he said as instruction to his community, "I received half a ladleful when I was with your grandfather Rinzai and the other half when I was with your grandmother Massan. Now that I have completely drunk a whole ladleful, it has been nourishment enough to satisfy me even to this very moment."

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8. Luk'ou, the name of a village, means 'the mouth of—or entryway into—the path'. Since Massan was not asking a social question but a spiritual one, her response, which is based on 'path' being a reference to the spiritual Path, is asking Shikan why he is going about baldly claiming to have attained the Way, that is, to have realized Buddhahood.

9. A reference to her name, Massan, which means mountain peak.

10. A reference to a section of the *Lotus Scripture*, in which the Dragon King Sāgara's 8-year-old daughter, because she had already realized enlightenment, was capable of transforming herself into whatever it would take to quell the doubts of those who did not believe that a female could attain realization.

11. In China, fox spirits are believed to have the ability to transform themselves into manifestations of other beings. One example of this is contained in the kōan story of "Hyakujō's Fox", which Dōgen will explore later in his Discourse 73: On the Great Practice *(Daishugyō)*.

Now that you have heard of this way of his, you may hanker to know something about those former times. Massan was a model disciple of Master Daigu and had the strength and authority from the Transmission line to be a spiritual *jō* for Shikan. Rinzai was a Dharma heir of Ōbaku Unshi and had the strength and authority from his single-minded meditation to be a spiritual *ya* for Shikan. *Ya* is a respectful Chinese word for father, and *jō* is a respectful one for mother. Meditation Master Shikan's respectful bowing to the female monk Massan Ryōnen and his seeking the Dharma from her is a model of intent that we should follow. It is an example of constancy and integrity for those of us who study the Way in these latter days of the Dharma; it can be said to break down the barriers erected by discriminatory thinking.

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The female monk Myōshin was a disciple of Kyōzan. At the time when Kyōzan was engaged in selecting a monk to serve as the temple's Head of Foreign Relations and Secular Affairs, he asked, among others, the monks who had long served in offices, as well as those seniors who had served as his personal attendants, which person would be ideal for the post. Since many opinions were voiced, Kyōzan finally said, "My disciple Myōshin is, indeed, a woman; even so, she has the strength of will associated with courageous men. Surely, she should be appointed Head of Foreign Relations and Secular Affairs." All the members of the community concurred with him, and Myōshin was then given this post. At that time, none of the other dragon elephants* in Kyōzan's community thought ill of him or of her. Although this post was not one of the truly lofty positions in a temple, as the person appointed, she would no doubt have been conscientious in her service.

One day while she was serving in this post, a group of seventeen monks from the independent state of Shu [which is now part of Szechwan Province] arrived on a Zen-style pilgrimage to call on Masters and inquire of the Way. Intent on going up to seek an audience with Kyōzan, they were lodged in the temple for the night. While resting, they began an evening discussion, taking up the account of Great Ancestor Daikan Enō's 'wind and banner', but what each of the seventeen said was not on track.[12] At this time Myōshin, who was in the room next door,

12. Great Master Keizan's *Denkōroku* recounts the pertinent event: [Whilst still a layman,] Enō had taken up lodging on a temple verandah when a strong wind began to flap the temple banner, whereupon he heard two monks engaging in an argument with each other. One was saying that it was the banner that was moving, the other that it was the wind that was moving. The debate went back and forth without their being able to agree on the principle.

overheard what they had said and commented, "Seventeen blind donkeys have, to no avail, worn out who knows how many pairs of straw sandals without ever having caught sight of the Buddha Dharma even in their dreams!"

Also present at the time was a lay worker who overheard Myōshin's disapproving comment about the monks and told them what she had said. The seventeen, to a monk, felt no rancor at Myōshin's disapproval, but instead, felt embarrassed at not being able to say what Daikan Enō was talking about. Accordingly, they put on their formal robes and, making an offering of incense, respectfully bowed to her, requesting her to respond. Myōshin said to them, "Come right in front of me." The seventeen had barely taken a step towards her when she said, "This is not the wind moving, nor is This the flag moving, nor is This your mind moving." Upon her expressing the Matter* in this way, the seventeen, to a one, fully understood. They bowed, as disciples do when offering respect to their teacher. They immediately returned to the western state of Shu, without ever having gone up to visit Kyōzan.

Truly, her level of spiritual understanding is not surpassed even by those thrice wise and ten times saintly; her speech and actions are in direct descent from the Buddhas and Ancestors. For this reason, even today, when there is a vacant post for an Abbot or one who teaches in the Abbot's stead, we should invite a female monk who has realized what Dharma is to take the position. Even though a male monk be one of greater age and longer residence, if he has not realized what Dharma is, why would you want him instead? The one who is the head monk for a community must undoubtedly be someone spiritually clear-eyed. A person who is as dissipated in body and mind as he is limited in outlook, however, will be so hard-headed that he will often be the laughing stock of ordinary people. When it comes to the Buddha's Dharma, such a one is not even worth mentioning as a candidate. Likewise, there have no doubt been lay women and female monks of long standing who have not gone along with making bows to the monastic teachers who have passed on the Dharma to them. Because such women have neither understood nor practiced the Dharma, they are close to being animals and far from being Buddhas or Ancestors.

Should people deeply commit their hearts to sincerely devoting body and mind to the Buddha Dharma, the Buddha Dharma will undoubtedly compassionately reveal Itself to such people. Among people of all stations, even the foolish and befuddled are sensitive to sincerity, so why would the genuine

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Enō said to them, "Might a member of the laity be permitted to call a quick end to this lofty debate? Frankly, it is not the wind or the banner that is moving, kind sirs, it is your minds that are moving and nothing more."

Teachings of all the Buddhas not respond compassionately to sincerity? Even the dirt, stones, sand, and pebbles are not impervious to feelings of sincerity.

In present-day Sung China, there are female monks who have hung up their bowl bag in a temple.[13] Should word get around that one of them has realized what Dharma is, an imperial decree will be issued by a government office that she should be appointed Abbess of her own temple, and as a result, she will begin to teach in the Monks' Hall of the temple in which she is presently residing. The community of monks from the Abbot on down will go to seek her Teaching, and stand there listening to her Teaching, with the male monks asking her to answer their spiritual questions as well. This has been, and still is, the standard procedure. Once such a woman has realized what Dharma is, then she is truly an Old Buddha, so we should not look upon her as we did in the past. When we are having an audience with her, our contact will be from a new and special standpoint. When we meet her, we should face her with an attitude of 'today is today', regardless of how things were in the past. For example, a female monk to whom the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching has been Transmitted should respectfully be bowed to and asked for the Teaching by those in the four stages* of arhathood, those who are pratyekabuddhas,* and those thrice wise and ten times saintly, and she will acknowledge this bow. Why should only males be worthy of respect? Boundless space is simply boundless space; the four elements* are simply the four elements; the five skandhas* are simply the five skandhas. And they are no different for women. When it comes to realizing the Way, everyone may realize It. In any case, anyone who has realized what Dharma is should be deeply respected: do not concern yourself with whether it is a man or a woman. This is a most excellent rule of the Buddha's Way.

Also, in Sung China the term 'lay devotee' refers to a Buddhist gentleman who has not left home to become a monk. Some such gentlemen build a retreat for themselves and their wives, whereas others live alone in celibacy. It must be said, though, that they will still be troubled by various delusions and defiling passions as dense and entangling as a jungle. Nevertheless, once one of them has clarified the Matter, trainees will gather about him like clouds and mist, respectfully bowing and seeking spiritual benefits, behaving the same as they would towards a Master who had left home and become a monk. Be it a woman or be it an animal, you should do the same.

Someone who has not yet even dreamt of the Truth of Buddhism, even if he be an old monk of a hundred years, will not be the equal of a man or woman who

13. That is, they have entered a temple to train.

has realized what Dharma is; he should not be reverenced, but simply paid common respect, as between guest and host. Even a seven-year-old—were he or she to train in and practice Buddhism, and then say something that is Buddha Dharma—can be a teacher and guide for monks and laity, male and female. This child will be a compassionate parent to all sentient beings, just as was, for instance, the dragon king's daughter who had become a Buddha. We should make offerings and pay respect to such a one the same as we would to all Buddhas and Tathagatas. This is an ancient custom of the Buddha's Way. Those who may still be in ignorance and who lack the direct Transmission are to be pitied.

Recorded on the Clear, Bright Day in the second year of the En'o era (April 28, 1240) at Kannondōri in Kōshōrin-ji Temple.

And also, in past and present China and Japan, there have been women who have occupied the Imperial Throne. As each of these countries comes under the dominion of their imperial person, the people serve as this person's subjects. These imperial persons are not revered as individuals, but are respected instead for their social position. In the very same manner, ever since ancient times, female monks have not been revered as individuals, but humbly respected for having realized what the Dharma is.

And also, whenever there are female monks who have become arhats, the spiritual merits from their complying with the four stages to arhathood will come forth. These spiritual merits will always accompany them, and who among ordinary people of any social station could possibly equal the spiritual merits of these four stages? All the heavenly ones in the three worlds of sensual desire, form, and beyond form are in no position to surpass them. Nevertheless, when someone renounces worldly views, this is something that all heavenly beings revere. So, who would possibly fail to revere a Tathagata who passes on to us the True Teaching, or a bodhisattva who has given rise to the greatest of intentions? Anyone who fails to respect such a person is a strange one indeed! Should any of you possibly fail to respect supreme enlightenment, you would be a foolish and befuddled being who slanders the Dharma.

And also, in our country, imperial daughters, as well as daughters of high ranking ministers, have, on occasion, followed the retiring imperial consort into a monastery and have been given the Empress's 'cloister name' as an honor. Some of these women have shaved their heads; others have not. Be that as it may, monks in

name only who covet fame and crave gain are known to go in and out of the doors to the Empress's domicile, knocking their heads against the slippers of these women. Such people are even lower than the low. And worse still, how many of these male monks have grown old playing the role of slave to these women?[14] Alas, how pitiful that, for those born in a small, out-of-the-way country like ours, a form of wickedness like this has gone unrecognized. It does not exist in India or T'ang China. Only in our country, sorry to say, does this practice exist. These men have shaved their heads and then thoughtlessly transgressed the True Teachings of the Tathagata. Their defiling act, it must be said, is deep and heavy. How lamentable that, in losing sight of the fact that the worldly path is as the false flowers of fantasy and delusion, they have tied themselves down to the role of a slave. They have acted in this manner for the sake of some diverting and vain worldly way. In the name of that enlightenment which is unsurpassed, why have they passed over reverencing someone—be it male or female—who has truly realized that Teaching which is to be revered? It is simply because their resolve to esteem the Teaching is shallow and their determination to seek the Teaching is not broad in scope.

When someone is entangled with coveting jewels, he does not consider that he ought not to have them because they are a woman's jewels: when someone attempts to seek the Dharma, his determination should surely outdo this. When, indeed, it does, the sprouting grass and the trees, as well as the walls and the fences, dispense the True Dharma, and the myriad things that make up heaven and earth likewise bestow the True Dharma. This is a principle that, without fail, you need to be aware of. Even if you meet a genuine spiritual friend but have not yet given rise to this intention to seek the Dharma, you will be unable to take in the delightful, thirst-quenching waters of the Dharma. So, make a diligent effort.

And also, even today there are people, wretched from their folly, whose unconverted thinking has not gone beyond looking upon women simply as objects in the world of sensual desire. Disciples of Buddha should not be this way. Should you detest women because you think that they must be objects in the world of sensual desire, would you also detest all men? What causes staining and defilement to arise is treating men as comprising one world and women as another. In addition, looking upon someone as being neither male nor female is also to treat that person as 'an object apart'; even looking at that person as though a phantasm or an illusory flower is likewise treating him or her as 'an object apart'. There have

14. In other words, even those ladies-in-waiting who 'shaved their heads'—that is, had formally entered monastic life—were not behaving as female monks should, but were manipulating these ambitious, worldly monks for their own personal purposes.

been those who have engaged in a sexual act in connection with some reflection in water, and there have been sexual acts committed in connection with the sun in the sky. Deities have been used as such objects, as have hungry ghosts. Connections such as these are surely beyond count. It is said that there are eighty-four thousand worlds of them. Shouldn't these all be things to be given up? Are they not things that should all be ignored?

It says in the *Vinaya:*[15] "The two orifices of a male and the three orifices of a female are alike when it comes to committing a grievous breakage of the Precepts; those doing so may not dwell within the monastic community." Thus, if you dislike women because you think that they must be objects in the world of sensual desire, then males and females will end up mutually disliking each other, and it is unlikely that there will be any opportunity for either to find a way to the Other Shore. You should explore this principle in detail.

And also, among non-Buddhists there are those who are unmarried. Although celibate, they have not comprehended the Buddha's Dharma, and, because of their false views, they are outside the Way. Also, among the Buddha's disciples there are lay men and women who are husband and wife. Even though living as husband and wife, they <u>are</u> disciples of the Buddha, and thus no one among ordinary people of any station is their equal.

And also, in T'ang China there have been foolish and befuddled monks who, having given rise to the intention to commit themselves to the Way, have said, "I will never look at a woman in this or any future lifetime, no matter how long such a life may be."[16] On what teaching is this vow founded? Is it founded on the rules of society? Or on the Buddha's Dharma? Or on the teachings of some non-Buddhist? Or on the doctrines of some distracting demon from the world of sensual desire? What fault is there in being female? What virtue in being male? When it comes to being wicked, there have been men who were wicked; when it comes to being virtuous, there have been women who were virtuous. To respectfully ask to hear the Teaching and to long to leave the world of delusion behind certainly do not depend on one's being male or female. When people have not yet cut themselves off from their delusions, they are equally attached to delusion whether they be male or female. When people cut themselves off from delusion and reach certainty as to what is Real, again, there is no dividing line between males and

15. The *Vinaya* is a part of the Buddhist Canon which outlines and discusses the meaning and application of the Buddhist Precepts and various monastic rules and regulations.

16. This vow is probably based on a misunderstanding of one of ten vows listed in the *Avatamsaka Scripture*: "May my eye not look upon a woman (as a sexual object)."

females. Further, should you vow never to look at a woman, ought you to forsake women even at the moment when you take the Bodhisattva Vow to save all sentient beings from suffering, howsoever innumerable they may be? Were you to forsake women, you would not be a bodhisattva, so how could you speak of Buddhist kindliness and compassion? This vow to never look at a woman is simply the raving words of one who has drunk too deeply of the wine that those who rigidly follow the Lesser Course* are wont to brew. No one of any station should believe this to be what Truth is.

And also, should you despise women because you think that in ancient times they have committed some offense, then you must despise all bodhisattvas as well. Or, should you despise women because you think that at some later date they will surely commit some offense, then you must despise all bodhisattvas who have given rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood. If you despise women in any such ways, you must despise every single person, so how will you make manifest the Buddha's Dharma? Words like the ones uttered by such monks are, sad to say, the wild remarks of foolish people who do not understand what the Buddha taught. If the matter were like this vow, did the Venerable Shakyamuni and the bodhisattvas who were alive during His lifetime all commit offenses? Have Their enlightened minds been shallower than yours? You would do well to quietly think about this. Since the Ancestors and Masters associated with the Treasure House of the Dharma, as well as the bodhisattvas who lived during the Buddha's lifetime, did not take this vow, as part of your training and study you should look to see whether there is any place in the Buddha's Teachings where this could possibly have been taught. Were the matter like this vow, not only would you fail to ferry women to the Other Shore, you would also be unable to come and hear a woman who, having realized what Dharma is, has come out among the people to give voice to the Dharma for the sake of people in all stations of life. To fail to come and hear her is to fail to be a bodhisattva and, consequently, to be outside the Path of Buddhism.

If we now take a look at present-day Sung China, among the monks who seem to have trained and practiced for a long time, there are those who are uselessly counting the grains of sand in the ocean [17] and are drifting on the waves that arise upon the sea of birth and death. But there are women who seek out a spiritual friend to train under, and diligently do their training until they become a teacher and guide for people of all stations. It is like the old woman who threw away her rice cakes rather than selling them. Sad to say, even though her customer

17. An allusion to those who waste their time, caught up in studying the words in Scriptures without comprehending their meaning in context.

was a male monk, he was so busy counting sand grains in the ocean of Scriptural writings that he had still not seen what the Buddha was teaching, even in his dreams.[18]

To speak in broader terms, upon seeing an object in the world of desire, it would be good for you to learn to clarify what it is that you are looking at. To learn only to flee when you are frightened by something is the teaching and practice of those in the Lesser Course who rigidly follow what they have learned by rote. Were someone to attempt to abandon the populous east to live in seclusion in the sparsely-settled west, it would not mean that there are no objects in the world of desire to be found in the west. Even though such persons may think that they have succeeded in fleeing, to the extent that they have not yet clarified the matter of sensual desire, whether they keep their distance or come up close, there will be a world of desire. But this is not intended to be a full explanation, for the long threads of sensual desires will prove to extend even deeper.

And also, in Japan there is a situation which is truly ridiculous and worthy of laughter. It relates to what is called 'The Grounds of the Enclosed Realm' by some and 'The Training Ground of the Greater Course' by others, places that female monks and lay women are not permitted to enter.[19] This mistaken custom has been handed down for ever so long, and people have never questioned what it is all about. Those who have studied the ancient ways have never attempted to change this practice nor have scholars ever taken up the matter. Some refer to this practice as 'what an incarnation of a Buddha or a Bodhisattva does'; others speak of it as 'the tradition of our ancient predecessors'. Moreover, they have never called the matter into question. It is enough to make a person split a gut laughing. Just what is 'an incarnation of a Buddha or a Bodhisattva'? Is it a worldly-wise person or a saintly one? A god or a hungry ghost? One who is ten times saintly or one who is thrice wise? One who has realized what supreme enlightenment is or one who has realized the wondrous, full enlightenment of a Buddha? Furthermore, if we are not

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18. A reference to a kōan story involving a famous scholar of Buddhist Scriptures who was unable to express Their meaning in his own words when asked to do so by an old woman selling rice cakes. When he failed, she refused to sell him a rice cake and he had to go hungry. Dōgen will discuss this in detail later in Discourse 17: On 'The Mind Cannot Be Held Onto' *(Shin Fukatoku)*.

19. These terms are used in some Buddhist traditions for a monastery or the main training halls of a monastery. In Japan, it was a common practice to exclude women on the pretext of maintaining a strict adherence to the Precepts. However, as Dōgen will assert, this practice actually arises from a cultural bias and is both unsupported and unjustified by the Buddha Dharma.

to alter anything from the past, are we not to abandon our drifting through the realms of birth and death?

And besides, the Venerable Shakyamuni, our Great Teacher, is *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi,* supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. What had to be clarified, He made completely clear; what had to be done, He did fully; what needed to be explained, He fully explained. Is there a single person today who surpasses Him? And yet, in the Buddha's community during His lifetime, there were all four groups—male monastics, female monastics, lay men, lay women—and there were the eight categories of heavenly and demonic beings, and there were the thirty-seven categories of Venerable Ones who reside in the Diamond Mandala, and there were the eighty-four thousand categories of thoughts and things. In that all of these form the enclosure of the Buddha Realm, they are patently the Buddha's community. So, what Buddhist community is without female monastics, or lay women, or lay men, or the eight categories? We should not pray for a more pure and immaculate Enclosed Realm than that of the Buddha's community when the Tathagata was in the world, because such would be the realm of the demons of greed and desire. The manner of organizing a Buddhist community is such that it never differs, be it in the Buddha's own realm or in any other realm, including the realms of all the ten thousand Buddhas in the three temporal worlds.

What are called 'the Four Fruitions of Arhathood' refer to ultimate stages.[20] Whether a person is following the Greater or the Lesser Course, there will be no difference in the spiritual merits accruing from realizing these ultimate stages. Indeed, female monks who have experienced the Four Fruitions are many indeed. Within the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form, as well as in any of the Buddha lands throughout the ten directions of the universe, what world may they not reach? Who can ever possibly prevent anyone from doing his or her daily training in the Way?

And also, the wondrous, fully perfected enlightenment is the highest level. Since women are already acting as Buddhas, which of all the Teachings may they not thoroughly master?[21] Who could presume to hamper them or prevent them from realizing the goal? They already have spiritual merits that are said to illumine the whole universe in all ten directions, so who can put limits on them?

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20 These are the fruitions of the four stages of arhathood referred to previously in this discourse.

21. 'Acting as a Buddha' is synonymous with keeping the Precepts.

And also, would you hamper a celestial female who is in one of the heavens of the world of desire so as to prevent her from realizing the goal, or do the same to a daughter of some deity? Such celestial women have not as yet severed themselves from delusive views. They are still sentient beings who are drifting, and there are times when they commit acts that break the Precepts, and there has never been a time when this was not so, just as with female humans and animals who at times defile themselves, and there has never been a time when this was not so. Who is the one who would block these celestial women from the way of heaven or the way of the gods? They are already paying visits to the Buddhist communities in the three temporal worlds and have come to do spiritual training wherever a Buddha is. If you make a distinction between a place where a Buddha is and what a Buddhist community is, how will you accept either one in faith as a place of the Buddha Dharma? This is, simply, the height of folly of worldly people crazed by delusion: they are foolish when they fail to regret that someone has not wrested their wild fox of delusion from its dark and cavernous lair.

And also, the classification of disciples of the Buddha—be they bodhisattvas of the Greater Course* or shravakas* of the Lesser Course—is the same for both: first, male monastics; second, female monastics; third, lay men; fourth, lay women. This classification is known to those in the heavenly worlds as well as to those in the human worlds, and has been familiar since ancient times. Be that as it may, when it comes to the second group of Buddhist disciples, they surpass even a saintly ruler who makes the wheels of governance roll on, and they surpass even Shakrendra, Lord of the Thirty-three Heavens. There is no spiritual place that one of this group cannot realize, to say nothing of the ranks of rulers and high ministers in a small out-of-the-way nation like ours.

Now, when we look at a 'Training Ground' where they say female monks must not enter, male field hands, simple rustics, farmers, and woodcutters are given entrance with impunity, to say nothing of rulers, high ministers, officials of all types, and councilors: whoever is male may enter. Were we to discuss the understanding of the Way of a field hand, say, and a female monk, or the spiritual level they have realized, what quality would we ultimately come to ascribe to each? No matter whether we are discussing the matter in worldly terms or in Buddhist ones, the place that a female monk may realize cannot possibly be realized by a field hand or a simple rustic.[22] Small nations that are excessive in their turbulent and riotous behavior, first of all, have left the traces of their

22. Not because such persons are spiritually deficient, but because it is improbable that they are devoting themselves to the spiritual training that a monk is undergoing.

excess.[23] How lamentable that there is any place where a disciple of that Kindly Parent of the Three Temporal Worlds, upon arriving in a small country, is barred from and may not enter.

And also, some fellows who may dwell in a place they call 'the Enclosed Realm' show no dread of the ten evil acts and fully commit the ten most serious forms of them.[24] In a realm where defiling acts are cultivated, is it simply a matter of despising those who do not cultivate them?

Further, the five treacherous deeds* are considered even more serious, yet some who live within 'the Grounds of the Enclosed Realm' are apparently committing such acts. Devilish realms like these should, beyond question, be smashed.[25] Such monks would do well to study the edifying instructions given by the Buddha and thereby to enter into the Realm of Buddhas, which, of course, includes repaying one's indebtedness to the Buddha for His kindness. I wonder whether those of old who constructed such 'Enclosed Realms' really understood their purpose. From whom did they receive Transmission: from whom did they receive the seal* of Buddha Mind? As it has been described, the person who truly enters the Great Realm wherein all Buddhas are enclosed cuts himself free from any attachments, not only to 'all Buddhas' but also to 'sentient beings', not only to 'the physical world' but also to 'emptiness', and thus returns to the Source, Which lies within the wondrous Teachings of all the Buddhas. Accordingly, any sentient being who takes but one step into this Realm will nevertheless receive the spiritual merits of a Buddha. They will receive the merits from not having deviated from the Path, as well as the merits from realizing Immaculacy. When someone is attached to one place, then he is attached to the whole realm of thoughts and things: when someone is involved with one serious breakage of the Precepts, he is tied to the world of all thoughts and things.

There is a realm enclosed by Water, and there is an enclosing of this realm by Mind, and there is an enclosing of this realm by the Unbounded. You need to realize that, within this realm, beyond doubt, there is a Transmission and a passing on of the Buddha seal. Furthermore, once this realm has been enclosed, the Sweet

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23. Dōgen wrote this during the height of a series of clan wars that had already been devastating many areas of Japan for almost a century.

24. That is, the ten evil acts arising from breaking the Ten Precepts and the more serious forms of such breakage.

25. The term 'devilish' refers to those conditions wherein a trainee is faced with a delusive obstacle to his training which he allows to divert him from the Path.

Dew has flowed into it, the ceremony of Taking Refuge in the Triple Treasure has been performed, and the realm has been consecrated, then it is as the poem says:

This realm completely permeates
the worlds of thoughts and things
And, by its very nature,
is bound to Boundless Immaculacy.

I wonder whether those old men of former times who spoke of what is now habitually called 'the Enclosed Realm' understood the meaning of this poem. For, when you try to think about it, my dear monks, the mind cannot directly grasp that the whole universe of thoughts and things is enclosed within this Enclosure. Beyond doubt, should you drink of the wine of those who rigidly follow the Lesser Course, you will mistake the tiny world of self for the Great Matter.

I pray that you will quickly sober up from your habitual drunkenness on delusion and that you will not deviate from "The whole universe <u>is</u> the Great Realm of all Buddhas." In your trying to rescue all sentient beings from their suffering and ferry them across to the Other Shore, they will respectfully bow to you and venerate the merits from receiving your spiritual instructions. Who among them will not call this 'securing the very Marrow of the Way'?

Written at Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the day before the winter season in the first year of the Ninji era (October 16, 1240).

11

On 'Just for the Time Being, Just for a While, For the Whole of Time is the Whole of Existence'

(Uji)

Translator's Introduction: *"Uji"* is Dōgen's discourse on the significance of *anatta* and *anicca*—the Buddhist terms for 'no permanent, abiding self' and 'continual change'—and their application to treading the paths of Right Understanding and Right Thought. It is not, strictly speaking, a discourse, for Dōgen gave the text to his monks in written form, which suggests that he intended it to be read over and studied carefully, rather than to be absorbed by hearing it only once.

Because it is linguistically possible to translate the title as 'Being and Time', some modern scholars have been led to assume that Dōgen was engaging in a form of philosophical speculation akin to that of some Western existentialists. Such an approach, however, would seem counter to the purpose behind a discourse given by a Buddhist Master, since speculative thinking—philosophical or otherwise—is a type of mentation that trainees are working to disengage themselves from so that they may progress towards realizing spiritual Truth, which lies beyond the reaches of speculation.

The key term, which is presented as the title, has meanings which no single English rendering fully encompasses. To begin with, *uji* (the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese *you-shih*) has long been a common, everyday phrase in China, as it has been for the Japanese when read as *aru toki*, encompassing in both languages such English equivalents as 'just for the time being', 'there is a time when', 'at some time', 'now and then', and the like. During his presentation, Dōgen also explores the two components from which the word *uji* is made, drawing examples of their usage from everyday Japanese. The first half (*u*) refers to 'existence' or 'being'; the second (*ji*) has a variety of close English equivalents, including 'time', 'a time', 'times', 'the time when', 'at the time when' (as well as 'hour' or 'hours' when used with a number) or as signifying what is temporal ('sometime', 'for a time', etc.). The phrase *aru toki* has already appeared with some frequency in several of Dōgen's earlier discourses, particularly as a phrase in an extended kōan story to signal that an important event is about to happen, such as a one-to-one exchange with a Master that will trigger the disciple's realization of what Truth is. In this context, it conveys the sense of 'and then, one day'.

Underlying the whole of Dōgen's presentation is his own experience of no longer being attached to any sense of a personal self that exists independent of time and of other beings, an experience which is part and parcel of his 'dropping off of body and mind'. From this perspective of his, anything having existence—which includes every thought and thing—is inextricably bound to time, indeed, can be said to '<u>be</u> time', for there is no thought or thing that exists independent of time. Time and being are but two aspects of the same thing, which is the

interrelationship of *anicca,* 'the ever-changing flow of time' and *anatta,* 'the absence of any permanent self existing within or independent of this flow of time'. Dōgen has already voiced this perspective in Discourse 1: A Discourse on Doing One's Utmost in Practicing the Way of the Buddhas (*Bendōwa),* and in Discourse 3: On the Spiritual Question as It Manifests Before Your Very Eyes (*Genjō Kōan),* where he discussed the Shrenikan view of an 'eternal self' and the Buddhist perception of 'no permanent self'.

In the present discourse, Dōgen uses as his central text a poem by Great Master Yakusan Igen, the Ninth Chinese Ancestor in the Sōtō Zen lineage. In the Chinese version, each line of this poem begins with the word *uji*, which functions to introduce a set of couplets describing temporary conditions that appear to be contrastive, but which, in reality, do not stand against each other. These conditions comprise what might be referred to as 'an I at some moment of time'; this is a use of the word 'I' that does not refer to some 'permanent self', abiding unchanged over time (as the Shrenikans maintained) but to a particular set of transient conditions at a particular time. In other words, there is no permanent, unchanging 'Yakusan', only a series of ever-changing conditions, one segment of which is perceived as 'a sentient being', which is, for convenience, conventionally referred to as 'Yakusan'. Both Yakusan and Dōgen understand *uji* (in its sense of 'that which exists at some time') as a useful way of expressing the condition of *anatta*, and in this sense it is used to refer to a state of 'being' that is neither a 'permanent self' nor something separate from 'other'; it is the 'I' referred to in one description of a kenshō experience (that is, the experiencing of one's Buddha Nature) as 'the whole universe becoming I'. Hence, when the false notion of 'having a permanent self' is abandoned, then what remains is just *uji*, 'the time when some form of being persists'.

After presenting Yakusan's poem, Dōgen focuses on that aspect of the poem that does not deal with metaphors, images, symbols, etc., and which is the one element in the poem that readers are most likely to pay small heed to: the phrase *uji* itself. His opening statement encapsulates the whole of what he is talking about in this text, namely: "The phrase 'for the time being' implies that time in its totality is what existence is, and that existence in all its occurrences is what time is."

Dōgen then begins to 'unravel' this statement, describing not only its implications but also its applications to practice. The points that he takes up are dealt with as they come to him, as they 'flow forth'. Therefore, he talks about 'time' for the time being, and then talks about 'existence' for the time being, and then goes back to 'time' just for a while before moving on to some other aspect just for a while. In other words, his text is not only about *uji*, it is written from the perspective of one who lives *uji*, and who also writes *"Uji"* so that the very way in which he presents his discussion reflects what *uji* is about. That is to say, he holds onto nothing as absolute, for all that is phenomenal—that is, every thought and thing that ever arises—is just for the time being.

Within the original text, there are sudden, unexpected shifts, as though Dōgen were deliberately trying to help his readers bypass or short-circuit a purely intellectual comprehension of what he is saying in order to catch a glimpse of that state of being which Dōgen himself had already reached. To help the present-day reader keep from making unintentional links between sentences that appear in sequence but which take up different points, Dōgen's text has been divided accordingly.

Although the entire discourse contains a number of remarks that may require some reflection to penetrate, near the end of his discourse Dōgen has an extended discussion that may prove daunting to some readers because of its succinctness. To make what is being said there more accessible, paraphrases have been supplied in the footnotes, which make explicit in English what is implicit in the original.

Readers who find it helpful to refer to the Introduction and footnotes may find it rewarding to reread just the text of *"Uji"*, for there are aspects of this discourse, in particular, that may well open up for them through encountering the flow of Dōgen's presentation without interruptions.

A former Buddha once said in verse:

Standing atop a soaring mountain peak is for the time being
And plunging down to the floor of the Ocean's abyss is for the time being;

Being triple-headed and eight-armed is for the time being
And being a figure of a Buddha standing sixteen feet tall or sitting eight feet high is for the time being;

Being a monk's traveling staff or his ceremonial hossu is for the time being
And being a pillar supporting the temple or a stone lantern before the Meditation Hall is for the time being;

Being a next-door neighbor or a man in the street is for the time being
And being the whole of the great earth and boundless space is for the time being.[1]

1. Dōgen appears to understand Yakusan's image of 'a figure of a Buddha standing sixteen feet tall or sitting eight feet high' as referring to one who has realized his or her Buddha Nature and lives accordingly at all times. It is likely that 'standing' and 'sitting' are references to the Four Bodily Postures: standing, walking, sitting, and reclining. The first two represent active modes, the latter two passive ones: that is, 'whether one is inwardly or outwardly active, whether one is awake or sleeping'.

   'Being triple-headed and eight-armed' is an allusion descriptive of several guardian beings who protect Buddhist temples and their trainees. The most likely candidates in the Zen tradition would be Achalanātha, the Steadfast Bodhisattva, and Rāgarāja, the Passionate Bodhisattva. The former is sometimes associated with the firm commitment of trainees to

The phrase 'for the time being' implies that time in its totality is what existence is, and that existence in all its occurrences is what time is. Thus, 'being a golden body sixteen feet tall' refers to a time. And because it is a time, its time will have a wondrous luminosity—a point that we will be studying and learning about during the present twenty-four hours. 'Being one with three heads and eight arms' also refers to a time. And because it is a time, it will be one and the same as the present twenty-four hours. Granted that we may not yet have measured the length of these twenty-four hours as to whether they are ever so long or as short as a sigh, still we speak of them as 'the twenty-four hours of our day'. The traces of this time having come and gone are clear, so people do not doubt that these hours have occurred. But, though people have no doubt about time having occurred, the past may be something that they have not known through their direct experience. And, just because sentient beings are always having their doubts about anything and everything that they have not directly experienced, this does not mean that what they may have previously doubted is the same as what they may now have doubts about, for doubts themselves are merely 'just for the moment' kinds of time, and nothing more.

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Since we human beings are continually arranging the bits and pieces of what we experience in order to fashion 'a whole universe', we must take care to look upon this welter of living beings and physical objects as 'sometime' things. Things do not go about hindering each other's existence any more than moments of time get in each other's way. As a consequence, the intention to train arises at the same time in different beings, and this same intention may also arise at different times. And the same applies to training and practice, as well as to realizing the Way. In a similar manner, we are continually arranging bits and pieces of what we experience in order to fashion them into what we call 'a self', which we treat as 'myself': this is the same as the principle of 'we ourselves are just for a time'.

Because of this very principle of the way things are, the earth in its entirety has myriad forms and hundreds of things sprouting up, each sprout and each form being a whole earth—a point which you should incorporate into your study of the Way, for the recognition of the coming and going of things in this manner is a first

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train until they have overcome all hindrances to realizing enlightenment as they persist in helping others to realize Truth. The latter has associations with a passionate desire to help all sentient beings realize Buddhahood.

Please see the *Glossary* for the metaphorical meanings of a monk's traveling staff, a ceremonial hossu, a temple pillar, and a stone lantern.

step in training and practice. When you reach such a fertile field of seeing the way things really are, then the earth in its entirety will be 'one whole sprouting, one whole form'; it will be comprised of forms that you recognize and forms that you do not, sproutings that you recognize and sproutings that you do not. It is the same as the times we refer to in 'from time to time', which contain all forms of existence and all worlds. So take a moment to look around and consider whether there is any form of being, that is, any 'world', that does or does not find expression at this very moment of time.

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When ordinary, everyday people who do not take the Buddha's Teachings as their model hear the phrase 'just for the time being' in Yakusan's poem, they customarily hold a view like the following:

> There was once a time when Yakusan had become what he describes as 'someone with three heads and eight arms' and some other time when he had become 'someone eight or sixteen feet tall'. It is as though he were saying, "I have crossed the rivers and climbed over the mountains.[2] Even though those mountains and rivers may have existed in the past, I have completely gone beyond them and have now made a place for myself atop a vermilion pedestal in the Jeweled Palace.[3] I fancy that the mountains and rivers on the one hand and I on the other are now as far apart as heaven and earth."

But such a view is not all there is to the principle of the case.

At the time when, proverbially, a mountain was being climbed and a river was being crossed, an I existed, and it was the time for that particular I.[4] Since such an I existed, time could not abandon it. If time did not have the characteristic of 'coming and going, being continually in flux', then the time when this I was

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2. An allusion to surpassing hindrances by training oneself to live by the Precepts and to surmounting obstacles by practicing meditation.

3. A metaphor for being in the state of experiencing what 'being enlightened' is. The reference is to a lotus pedestal upon which an awakened being sits when residing in the Western Pure Land.

4. Dōgen's point in using the word 'I' as a noun in this and the following paragraph is to indicate that there is no permanent, unchanging self that is being referred to, but rather a cluster of physical and mental characteristics that is flexible and fluid, undergoing change as the conditions and circumstances of what is existing change. Hence, this 'I' refers to a series of manifestations over time, which are perceived as related to 'a sentient being called Yakusan', but which have no unchanging, atemporal 'permanent self' passing through them.

'climbing atop the mountain' would have remained forever, eternally comprised of that particular 'time when'. But, since time retains the characteristic of 'coming and going, being continually in flux', there is a flow of ever-present 'nows', each comprised of a time when an I exists. And this is what is meant by the phrase 'just for the time being'. Surely you don't think that the earlier time when the word 'I' referred to 'climbing the mountain' or 'crossing the river' gulped up the later time when the word 'I' referred to 'being on a vermilion pedestal within the Jeweled Palace', or think that the former has vomited out the latter, do you?!?[5]

Yakusan's 'being a triple-headed and eight-armed one' refers to a time that he would have called 'yesterday': his 'being someone eight or sixteen feet tall' refers to a time that he would have called 'today'. Be that as it may, this principle of a past and a present simply corresponds to the two periods of time when an I had headed straight into the mountains and when an I was now looking out from a vermilion pedestal over the thousands of peaks and the thousands beyond them. Nor have such periods passed away. The time of an I being 'triple-headed and eight-armed for the time being' had passed, but even though it seemed to be of another time and place, it was indeed a part of the ever-present now. The time of an I being 'eight or sixteen feet tall for the time being' has also passed, but even though it now seems to be something distant from us, it is indeed part of the ever-present now. Thus, we speak of the pine as an analogy for time, as we also do of the bamboo.[6]

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Do not look upon time as 'something that just flies away': do not teach yourself that 'flying away' is simply how time functions. Were we to endow time with the property of 'flying away', there would undoubtedly be a gap left by the time that has flown. Should anyone have not yet heard teaching upon the principle expressed by the phrase 'just for the time being', he may still think of time only as 'something which has gone away'.

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5. Most likely this sentence refers to common but erroneous views as to where the flowing moments of the ever-present now go to when they are no longer present, and where such moments come from. Dōgen is asserting that the past does not exist as an entity that 'swallows up' the instances of present time once they are over, nor is the present something thrown out from such a past, as fatalism might suppose.

6. An allusion to the Zen saying, "The bamboo, all up and down its length, has joints (which mark the passage of the seasons); the pine (being ever-green) has no colors to differentiate past from present."

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In short, everything whatsoever that exists in the whole universe is a series of instances of time. Since everything is for the time being, we too are for the time being.

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Time has the virtue of continuity: it continuously flows from the today that we are talking about to a tomorrow, from a today to a yesterday, from a yesterday to a today. It flows from a today to a today and from a tomorrow to a tomorrow. Because continual, continuous flow is a function of time, past and present times do not pile atop each other nor do they form an accumulative line. Yet, even so, Seigen, too, represents a time, as does Ōbaku, and likewise Baso and Sekitō represent times.[7] Because we ourselves and others, as previously stated, are already 'beings for a time', our training and practice are times, as is also our awakening to Truth. Our 'entering the mud or going into deep water'[8] is likewise a time.

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The opinions of ordinary, everyday people today—as well as the source of those opinions—are based on what these people perceive. But this is not what ordinary people consider as being how things operate. For them, the way things operate is that they have 'simply come about for a while'. Because these people have convinced themselves that this time and this existence of theirs is not related to the way things really operate, they conclude that a golden body sixteen feet tall could not possibly be theirs.[9] Trying to free oneself from this opinion that "the

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7. Seigen, Sekitō's Master, was already dead before Yakusan was born, and therefore represents a time that Yakusan did not know through direct experience. Ōbaku, whose Master was Baso Dōitsu, was a contemporary of Yakusan, and therefore 'a time' simultaneous with Yakusan's time. Baso was contemporary with Sekitō, both together representing a time that included a past that Yakusan did not know directly, a past that he did, a present that was also 'his time', and a future time that was not theirs. Although Yakusan was Sekitō's disciple and ultimately his Transmission heir, at one point Sekitō sent Yakusan to train under Baso, who triggered Yakusan's realization of the Truth. These relationships represent various ways in which the time of a particular sentient being (Yakusan) relates to the times of other sentient beings.

8. A traditional Zen saying alluding to the actions of a bodhisattva who is willing to go anywhere to help ferry sentient beings to the Other Shore.

9. That is, they think, "I am no more than what I am right now, so I could not possibly be a Buddha, and being what I am now, I cannot see how I could possibly become a Buddha."

golden body of a Buddha cannot be mine" is also a bit of what the phrase 'just for the time being' implies, and is something about which a trainee who has not yet reached spiritual certainty may say, "Oh, I see, I get it!"

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In the world today, we structure time by segments which we name, for instance, the Hours of the Horse or the Hours of the Sheep.[10] Be that as it may, these segments are merely persistent fluctuations in the here and now of thoughts and things which arise and fall. It is the same with the Hours of the Rat and the Hours of the Tiger, which are also 'for a time'.[11] And being an ordinary creature is also 'for a time', as is being a Buddha. At such times as these, one will swear that being three-headed and eight-armed is the whole universe or that being a golden body sixteen feet tall is the whole universe. To universally penetrate the whole universe by means of the whole universe is called 'complete realization'. For us to give proof of a golden body sixteen feet tall by our attaining a golden body sixteen feet tall is to manifest our initial spiritual intention, our training and practice, our realizing of enlightenment, and our experiencing the freedom of nirvana—all of which comprises what existence is and what time is. It is a complete realization that the whole of time is what the whole of existence is, and that there is nothing more than this. Anything else would be a time when there was a partial 'complete realization', which would be a full realization of a part of what 'just for the time being' refers to.

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Even at a stage where it would seem that you have taken a false step, this condition will be a state of 'being'. Further, should you leave the matter at this, your condition will still constitute a persistence of 'a time being', which will include both a before and an after to this 'having taken a false step'. Dealing with

10. In medieval Japan, a full day was divided into twelve two-hour segments, named after the twelve signs of the Chinese zodiac. The Time of the Horse was 12:00 noon, and the Hours of the Horse were the hours preceding and following noon. Similarly, the Time of the Sheep was equivalent to 2:00 P.M. Except in the imperial court, where a water-clock was used for assuring that a ceremony was performed at the most auspicious time, determining time throughout medieval Japan was approximated based on the position of the sun in relation to the zenith.

11. The Time of the Rat was midnight, and that of the Tiger was 4:00 A.M., times which were still commonly referred to as 'segments of time', even though they could not be determined, since the sun was not visible. Dōgen's point is that all such divisions are cultural conventions and do not constitute what time really is.

thoughts and things while they persist, like a fish darting about through the water,[12] is indeed what 'being just for the time being' is about. So, do not be upset over what is not, and do not be pressured by what is.

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Should you reckon one-sidedly that time only goes by, you will not comprehend time as something that has not yet arrived. Although we can say that comprehending something also constitutes a time, there is no connection that can link the one to the other.[13] No one with a human carcass who looks on time merely as 'something that rolls on by me' can have any insight into the 'time being' that persists just for a while, not to even mention the time when the barrier gate to realizing enlightenment is penetrated.

Even if we comprehend that It is what persists, who can express in words what This is that we have realized? Even if, over a long time, we have found ways to express It in words, there is no one yet who has not groped for ways to make It be manifest before your very eyes. Were we to leave the matter of what 'being for the time being' means to the way in which ordinary persons understand the phrase, it would be a 'being for the time being' in which enlightenment and nirvana were, at best, merely passing characteristics. The ever-present 'time being' of which I am speaking cannot be snared like some bird by net or cage: it is what is manifesting before us. It is a time when the heavenly lords and the other celestial inhabitants are now manifesting right and left of us, and are making every effort to do so, even at this very moment. In addition, it is a time when beings of water and land are making every effort to manifest. Beings of all sorts, who are visible or invisible for the time being, are all making every effort to manifest, making every effort to flow on. If they did not make every effort to flow on, not even a single thought or thing would ever manifest: nothing would continue on. You would do well to consider this point.

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The transiting of time and being is not to be thought of as wind blowing the rain from east to west. And it would be inaccurate to say that the whole world is unchanging, or that it is motionless: it is in transition. The flow of time and being is like spring, for instance. The spring has an appearance of being abundant in its

12. A traditional Zen simile applied to a person who engages in the practice of all-acceptance and non-attachment.

13. That is, for instance, one cannot predict the precise moment when someone will comprehend something.

burgeoning, and we refer to this as its 'passage'. We should consider well that the spring 'passes' without excluding anything within it. In other words, the passing of spring is, to be sure, a passing of what we humans call 'spring'. 'Passing' is not what spring is, but refers to the passage of the springtime; hence, it is a transition that is now being actualized during the time of spring. You would do well to consider and reflect on this very carefully, for in speaking of 'transiting', some may think of it in reference to some place physically apart from themselves, which can be reached by turning eastward, say, or by traveling past myriad worlds over millions and millions of eons. But such people are not concentrating simply on the study of the Buddha's Way.

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Yakusan, who by imperial decree was named 'The Great Teacher Whose Way Is Broad', one time, at the direction of Great Master Sekitō Kisen, made a spiritual call on Meditation Master Baso.

> Yakusan asked him, "The one standing before you has a fairly good idea of what all twelve divisions of the Scriptures as found among the followers of the Three Vehicles* of Buddhism are about, so just why did the Ancestral Teacher Bodhidharma come east to China???"
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> Being queried in this manner, Meditation Master Baso responded, "There are times when we make That One's eyebrows rise and His eyes twinkle, and there are times when we do not make His eyebrows rise and His eyes twinkle. There are times when we who make That One's eyebrows rise and His eyes twinkle are right, and there are times when we who make His eyebrows rise and His eyes twinkle are not right."
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> Upon hearing this, Yakusan had a great awakening and humbly said to Baso, "When I was with Sekitō, I was like a mosquito climbing over an iron ox, trying to find a place to bite."

Baso's way of putting things is unlike that of any other. 'Brows and eyeballs' would refer to the mountains and the oceans, because the mountains and the oceans <u>are</u> His brows and eyeballs.[14] Baso's 'making Him raise His eyebrows' would be

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* See *Glossary.*

14. In this and the following paragraph, the images of 'mountain' and 'ocean' echo the opening couplet of Yakusan's poem. Context suggests that 'mountain' is an allusion to training and practice, and 'ocean' to the realization of one's innate state of 'being enlightened'.

comparable to Yakusan's focusing on the Mountain, and Baso's 'making His eyes twinkle' would be comparable to Yakusan's fixing his eyes on the Ocean. 'Being right' means attempting to learn from 'That One': 'That One' is That which is being invited to teach. 'Not being right' does not mean 'not causing Him to act as He did', nor does 'not causing Him to act as He did' mean 'not being right'.

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Mountains are of time: oceans are of time. Were there no time, neither mountains nor oceans could be. Do not think that time does not exist for the mountains and oceans of the present moment. Were time to cease to exist, so would mountains and oceans cease to exist: if time does not become extinct, then mountains and oceans too will not become extinct. This is why the morning star arose, the Tathagata emerged, his clear Eye of Wise Discernment manifested, and the raising of the udumbara flower came about.[15] These are times: were they not times, there could not be any 'being with It' here and now.[16]

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Meditation Master Kisei of Sekken County was a Dharma descendant of Rinzai, as well as Shuzan's direct heir. One day, he addressed his monastic community in verse, saying:

> *There is a time when intending has arrived, but not expressing,*
> *There is a time when expressing has arrived, but not intending,*
> *There is a time when both intending and expressing have arrived,*
> *And there is a time when both intending and expressing have not arrived.*[17]

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15. Allusions to Prince Siddhārtha's awakening to the Truth upon seeing the morning star arise, and then, as the Tathagata, with eyes twinkling, holding aloft the udumbara flower, which set in motion the Transmission of the Truth, starting with his smiling disciple Makakashō.

16. To 'be with It' here and now is an attempt to render the term *immo* when used in its Chinese slang meaning for the condition of persons or things being just what they truly are, without any sense of an existence separate from time and without any sense of a false self.

17. To paraphrase these four conditions from the perspective of Dōgen's analysis of the poem: (1) there is a time when someone deliberately trains with the intention of realizing what the Truth is, but since he (or she) has not yet arrived at that state, he is unable to express what

Both 'intending' and 'expressing' are 'for the time being': both 'having arrived' and 'having not arrived' are 'for the time being'. Even though one may say that "the time of arriving is not yet fully here," the time of 'having not arrived' is here. 'Intending' is the donkey; 'expressing' is the horse.[18] The role of the horse is assigned to expressing; the role of the donkey is assigned to intending. Just as 'arriving' is not synonymous with 'coming', 'having not arrived' does not mean 'still not having arrived', for this is what being 'just for the time' is like. Arriving is hindered by 'arrival', but is not hindered by not having arrived. Having not arrived is hindered by 'not having arrived', but is not hindered by arriving. So, when it comes to intending, we look at our intention as just an intention; when it comes to expressing, we look at our expression as just an expression; when it comes to hindrances, we look at what is hindering us as just a hindrance. It is a matter of 'obstructions' getting in the way of obstructions, all of which are 'just for a time'.[19] Although you may say that 'obstruction' is a word that we can apply to other situations, there is still nothing which I am calling 'an obstruction' that impedes those situations. It is ourselves encountering others; it is others encountering each other; it is ourselves encountering ourselves; it is one who is emerging encountering one who has emerged. If each of these did not have their specific time, being 'with It' here and now would be impossible. Furthermore, 'intending' refers to the time when the spiritual question manifests before our very eyes;

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that Truth is, and (2) there is a time when the trainee realizes what this Truth is and spontaneously (that is, without intention) gives expression to It, but without being fully conscious that this is what he has done, and (3) there is a time after having realized the Truth when the trainee deliberately gives expression to It, and (4) there is a time after having realized the Truth when the trainee is simply going on with his training, without deliberately trying to 'make a point of it'. These four conditions correlate with Dōgen's terms 'intending', 'arriving', 'having arrived', and 'having not arrived', which he presents in the ensuing paragraph.

18. That is, trainees should not wait until they have completely finished all training ('doing the donkey work of training') before attempting to give voice to the Dharma ('doing the horse work of teaching').

19. To help simplify this difficult and profound passage: One's arriving at realizing the Truth is hindered by any notion of 'having to arrive', but is not hindered by the fact that one has not yet arrived. One's state of having not arrived is hindered by a notion of 'not having arrived', but is not hindered by arriving. So, when it comes to intending to train, we look at our intention as just an intention; when it comes to expressing the Truth, we look at our expression as just an expression; when it comes to hindrances, we look at what is hindering us as just a hindrance. Similarly, it is a matter of our notions of 'obstructions' getting in the way of our seeing our obstructions (all of which, too, are just for the time being).

'expressing' refers to the time when one looks up and unbolts the barrier gate; 'arriving' refers to the time when body and mind are dropped off; and 'having not arrived' refers to the time when this 'dropping off' is left behind [as you go always onward, always 'becoming Buddha']. This is the way that you should diligently apply yourself, the way that you should treat whatever arises as 'just for a while'.

Although the venerable Masters up to the present time have spoken about the Matter* in such a way, might there not be something more that needs to be said? Well, I would add, "There are times when intending and expressing are halfway there, and there are times when intending and expressing are halfway not there." You would do well to investigate and clarify the Matter in such a way. And again, "Making That One's eyebrows rise and His eyes twinkle is half of what 'just for the time being' is about, and making That One's eyebrows rise and His eyes twinkle may also be a counterfeit 'just for the time being', and making That One's eyebrows rise and His eyes twinkle may also be a completely false 'just for the time being.'"

In such a manner, coming to training, going on in training, training until you arrive, and training beyond arriving are, at all times, 'just for the time being, just for a while'.

Written at Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the first day of winter in the first year of the Ninji era (October 17, 1240).

Copied by me during the summer training period in the first year of the Kangen era (1243).

Ejō

12

On the Transmission of the Kesa

(Den'e)

Translator's Introduction: This discourse and Discourse 84: On the Spiritual Merits of the Kesa *(Kesa Kudoku)* are both concerned with the kesa, the cloak-like robe which has traditionally been worn by most Buddhists, both monastic and lay, since the time of Shakyamuni Buddha. This discourse was based on a Dharma talk that Dōgen gave to his assembly and it appears in the earliest version of the *Shōbōgenzō,* whereas the *Kesa Kudoku* was apparently written to cover, in greater detail, certain points raised in *Den'e*, but it was not formally incorporated into the *Shōbōgenzō* until some time after Dōgen's death. While both discourses share common topics and even some similar or identical passages, each has much that is unique, and readers may well find the reading of both to be worthwhile, despite any repetitions.

Two technical Buddhist terms that are applied to the kesa in both texts need some explication. The first is *juji*, translated as 'to accept and keep to (the kesa)'. While, from a linguistic perspective, it might also be rendered as 'to receive and keep (the kesa)', Dōgen explicitly states in both texts that he does not intend this latter meaning with its passive implication of 'being given something which is then put away for safekeeping'. That is, it is not enough to receive a kesa, the recipient must also accept it and what it implies; likewise, the robe is not to be stored away, but is to be put to use. 'Putting it to use' implies keeping to it and what it stands for, just as one keeps to the Precepts and what they stand for, an analogy that Dōgen implies in both texts but does not explicitly make.

The second term is *butsue*, which has multiple meanings, including 'the Buddha robe', 'the Buddha's robe', 'a Buddha robe', and 'a robe for a Buddha', referring to both a physical garment and that which spiritually enrobes the trainee. In some contexts, it is clear which meaning Dōgen intends, whereas in other contexts more than one of these may be intended, so that the meaning of the passage becomes ambiguous, permitting a different understanding according to whether the reader is, say, a lay person, a novice monk, a transmitted monk, or one who has or has not had a kenshō, that is, the experience of one's Buddha Nature. And there are times when Dōgen is obviously talking about a physical robe, only to suddenly shift to talking about a spiritual robe, and then almost immediately to go back to his discussion of a physical robe. It is left to the reader to discover and enjoy this multidimensional, kaleidoscopic aspect in Dōgen's writing.

In these two texts, there is also an aspect of tone that needs comment, for it may seem to some readers that, in a number of passages, Dōgen is being singularly bombastic. This is not the case. Dōgen was faced with several problems in the training of his disciples. First, he was having difficulty with state and ecclesiastical authorities who did not want him (or anyone else) to teach pure meditation to the exclusion of other forms of meditation. Second, his reputation had already spread widely enough that he was beginning to attract disciples who had done training under other teachers, teachers who were given to mixing all manner of non-Buddhist teachings and methods in with their Buddhist training. Third, as a verse from the monastic ordination ceremony

states, "All bodhisattvas, when converted to the Truth for the first time, search therefore, but their minds are hard and set and cannot be broken," but Dōgen attempts to help his bodhisattvas by hammering away at some of the hardness and rigidity of their thinking. Fourth, because trainees are apt to dismiss points of teaching which seem trivial to them, Dōgen, through his strong expression of feelings about these points, is helping his disciples to realize the vital importance of keeping true to the Dharma. Such an emotional appeal would have been more persuasive to his medieval Japanese compatriots (and more easily remembered) than a finely wrought, elegantly presented logical refutation of erroneous practices and teachings.

The robe and the Dharma which Buddhas correctly Transmit to Buddhas were, beyond doubt, properly Transmitted to China only by the Highest Ancestor Bodhidharma at Shōrin-ji Monastery. That is to say, the Highest Ancestor was the Ancestral Master of the twenty-eighth generation from Shakyamuni Buddha. The twenty-eight generations in India passed this robe and Dharma on in succession, and They were properly Transmitted through six generations in China. These comprised thirty-three generations altogether for India and China.[1]

The Thirty-third Generation Ancestor, Meditation Master Daikan Enō, received the Transmission of this robe and Dharma on Mount Ōbai in the middle of the night and safeguarded Them throughout his life. To this day, this robe is still safely enshrined at Hōrin-ji Temple on Mount Sōkei. Various generations of imperial rulers respectfully requested that it be brought to court, where they made venerative offerings to it. It is treated as an object protected by wondrous spiritual guardians. Three emperors of the T'ang dynasty—Chu-tsung, Su-tsung, and T'ai-tsung—repeatedly had it brought back to court, so that they might make venerative offerings out of respect for it. Whenever it was sent for or returned, the emperors would have an imperial emissary accompany it, along with their edict on the matter. This is indicative of their great respect.

Emperor T'ai-tsung once sent the following edict when returning the Buddha's robe to Mount Sōkei, "I am now pleased to entrust to Commander General Liu Chung-ching, Pacifier of Our Nation, the return of this robe with all courtesies. We declare this robe to be a national treasure. Venerable Abbot, I pray that you will safely enshrine it in your temple, placing it under the rigorous care and protection of those monks of your community who have personally received from you the tenets of our religion, never letting it fall into neglect." Because of this attitude, emperors over a number of generations all regarded it as an important national treasure. Truly, the one who safeguards this robe of the Buddha in his

1. That is, Bodhidharma was considered both the twenty-eighth Indian Ancestor and the first Chinese Ancestor.

country is also a great treasure who surpasses even those who may hold dominion over any of the three-thousand great-thousandfold worlds, which are as countless as the sands of the Ganges. It is an object that far outranks Pien-ho's jewel.[2] Even if such a gem were to serve as the imperial seal at an enthronement, how could it possibly compare with the wondrous treasure that Transmits Buddhahood?

From the time of the great T'ang dynasty on, the monks and laity who have looked upon this robe with reverence and bowed to it have undoubtedly had a great capacity for faith in the Dharma. Had they received no help from the good that they did in previous lives, how could they possibly have received that body of theirs which made possible their actually looking upon, and reverently bowing to, the Buddha's robe that Buddha after Buddha had directly passed on? The skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of those who accept it in faith will take delight in it; those who cannot accept it in faith, even though this is the result of their own doing, will regret the absence of this seed of Buddhahood.

Even common folk say, "To see someone's daily deeds is to see what that person really is." To look upon and respectfully bow to the robe of a Buddha is to see Buddha, in all humility, right now. We should erect hundreds of thousands upon thousands of stupas* in venerative offering to this Buddha robe. Any beings who possess a mind, be they in the heavens above or in the oceans below, will deeply respect it. Among humans too—from saintly ones who rule over vast empires on down—anyone who can discern what is true and recognize what is surpassing will prize it.

Sad to say, some of the kinsmen who became rulers of China in later generations did not realize the enormous treasure that they had in their country. Often misled and captivated by Taoist teaching, many indeed abandoned the Buddha Dharma. At those times, they did not don the kesa but put the cap of a Taoist upon their shaven domes, and, when they lectured, their talk was in the direction of how to extend the length of one's life. This occurred during both the T'ang and Sung dynasties. Even though such types were considered rulers of their nations, they must have been more base than any of their subjects.

You should calmly consider whether the Buddha robe has come to abide in our country and is present here now. And you would also do well to ponder whether ours could be a Buddha Land for the robe, for it is more valuable than any

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2. Pien-ho was a person in ancient China who offered to three rulers a huge, unpolished jewel that he had found, but none of these rulers were able to perceive its intrinsic value, and therefore summarily rejected the offering.

* See *Glossary*.

ash relic or such. As for ashes, we have them for rulers of vast lands, and for lions, and for ordinary folk, as well as for pratyekabuddhas* and the like, but mighty rulers do not have a kesa, nor do lions, nor do ordinary folk: accept in deepest faith that Buddhas alone have the kesa.

Nowadays, foolish people in great numbers highly prize ash relics whilst knowing nothing of the kesa, much less of how they should preserve and keep to one. This is due to the fact that those who have heard of the importance of a kesa are few, and even they may not yet have learned of the True Transmission of the Buddha's Dharma.

When we carefully take into consideration how much time has passed since the Venerable Shakyamuni was in the world, it has been scarcely some two thousand years. Many of our national treasures and ancient sacred utensils that have come down to us today are older by far: the Buddha's Dharma and the Buddha's robe are newer and nearer our times. As the *Lotus Scripture* observes, the spiritual benefits arising from the propagation of the Buddha's Teachings will be wondrous, no matter how widely this Teaching may spread—be it through farmlands or towns—even if one person passes It on to only fifty others. National treasures and sacred utensils do have their merits, and the merits of the Buddha robe can never be less than, or even merely equal to these, for this robe has been truly Transmitted by authentic Dharma descendants.

Be aware that we can realize the Way when we hear the four lines of the kesa verse, and we can realize the Way when we hear a single line of Scripture. Why can the four lines of the verse or a single line of Scripture produce such a profound spiritual experience of being 'with It' here and now?[3] Because, as it is said, they are part and parcel of the Buddha Dharma.

Now, each kind of robe, including the nine types of sanghati robe, has been correctly passed on from the Buddha's Teaching.[4] None can be inferior to the four lines of the kesa verse or less beneficial than a single line of Scripture. Because of this, for more than two thousand years, the various beings who have been exploring how to follow the Buddha—both those whose practice stems from faith and those whose practice stems from understanding the Dharma—have all protected and kept to the kesa, and treated it as their very Body and Mind. Those folks who are in the dark as to the True Teaching of Buddhas do not revere or prize

3. To be 'with It' here and now is an attempt to render the term *immo* when used in its Chinese slang meaning for the condition of persons or things being just what they truly are, without any sense of an existence separate from time and without any sense of a false self.

4. The sanghati robe is the largest of three basic types of kesa. Dōgen gives a detailed explanation of all three in Discourse 84: On the Spiritual Merits of the Kesa *(Kesa Kudoku)*.

the kesa. Now, both Shakrendra [ruling lord of the Trayastrimsha Heavens] and the dragon lord who dwells in Anavatapta Lake, for instance, have guarded and protected the kesa, even though the first is a celestial lay ruler and the second a dragon lord.

Be this as it may, that type who shave their heads and then go around calling themselves 'disciples of Buddha' have not the slightest awareness of those who, having put on the kesa, accept and keep to it. This is to say nothing of their having any knowledge about its materials, colors, or dimensions, nor are they aware of the ways in which it is worn, nor, even less, have they ever seen, even in their dreams, the dignified manner in which it is treated.

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From ancient times, when the kesa has been spoken of, it has been called 'the garment that protects us from overheating our brains' and 'the garment of liberation'. In short, its spiritual merits are beyond measure. By virtue of the kesa, a dragon's scales can be liberated from their three types of burning pain.[5] When any of the Buddhas fully realized the Way, it was undoubtedly due to Their having made use of this robe. Truly, even though we have been born in a remote region at the time of the final stages of the Teaching, if any of us have the opportunity to choose whether to be Transmitted or not, we must accept in faith—as well as guard and maintain—the true inheritance that is being passed on to us.

What other tradition has genuinely Transmitted the robe and the Dharma of our Venerable Shakyamuni as we have genuinely Transmitted Them? They exist only in the Buddha's Way. Who, upon encountering this robe and Dharma, would fail to be generous in respecting Them and in making venerative offerings to Them? Even if, in the space of a single day, we were to renounce our physical life for times as countless as the sands of the Ganges, we should make venerative offerings to Them. We should vow that we will humbly raise Them above our head whenever we encounter Them in life after life, for generation after generation. Even though we may have been born in a place separated from the Buddha's native land by more than a hundred thousand leagues of mountains and seas, and even though we may be muddle-headed, ignorant provincials, the fact that we have heard this True Teaching, and have accepted and are keeping to this kesa, even if it be only for a single day and night, and are exploring how to put into practice a single line of Scripture or the whole of the kesa verse, this cannot be due simply to

5. Namely, suffering from fiery heat, from fierce desert winds, and from being devoured by a garuda bird.

the blessings and merits from our having made venerative offerings to just one or two Buddhas; it must be due to the blessings and merits from our having made venerative offerings to, and having attended upon, countless hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhas. Even if it were due to our own efforts, we should feel respect for the robe and Dharma, cherish Them, and prize Them.

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We should show our gratitude to the Ancestral Masters for their great kindness in Transmitting the Dharma to us. Since even animals repay kindliness, how could humans fail to understand kindness? If people do not recognize kindness, they must be inferior to animals; they must be even denser than animals.

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Those who are not Ancestral Masters who Transmit the Buddha's True Teaching do not even dream of the spiritual merits of this Buddha robe. How much less could they come up with anything that clarifies for others what its materials, colors, and measurements are? If you would follow in the footsteps of the Buddha, then you should, by all means, follow this robe and Dharma. Even after a hundred thousand myriad generations, people would still be able to correctly pass on the genuine Transmission for, undoubtedly, it will be the Buddha's Dharma. The proof of Its authenticity will indeed be evident.

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Even the secular Confucian teaching admonishes its followers not to wear clothing which differs from that officially worn during the time of the previous ruler, nor to act in ways that go against the regulations of previous rulers. It is also the same for the Buddha's Way: if something is not in accord with the Dharma clothing of previous Buddhas, do not use it. If it is something other than the Dharma clothing of previous Buddhas, what are we to clothe ourselves with so that we may train in and practice the Buddha's Way and attend upon all the Buddhas? Were we not to clothe ourselves with this 'garment', it would be hard indeed for us to enter into the assembly of the Buddhas.

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Since the middle of the Yung-p'ing era (67 C.E.) of Emperor Hsiao-ming of the Later Han dynasty, monks who came from India to eastern lands ceaselessly followed upon the heels of their predecessors, and we have often heard of monks heading to India from China, but none of these travelers said that they had ever

encountered anyone who conferred the Buddha Dharma face-to-face. All they had to show were words and forms that they had vainly learned from disputatious teachers and pedantic scholars of the *Tripitaka*.* They had not heard of the direct heirs of the Buddha's Dharma. Because of this, they could not go so far as to impart to anyone that the Buddha's robe was actually to be passed on, or to say that they had personally encountered anyone to whom the Buddha's robe had been passed on, or to tell of having seen or heard of anyone who had Transmitted the robe. Be very clear about this: they had not crossed the threshold and entered into the Buddha's family. Those fellows saw the kesa as just an item of clothing and nothing more, and did not realize that it was the most venerable and prized manifestation of the Buddha Dharma. Truly, what a pity!

Those who are genuine successors and have continued to Transmit the Treasure House of the Buddha's Dharma have also continued to pass on the robe of a Buddha, which they had received in turn. Among ordinary people, as well as among those in more lofty positions, it is widely known that the Ancestral Masters to whom the Treasure House of the Dharma has been genuinely Transmitted have never failed to see the Buddha robe or failed to pay attention to what it signifies. Hence, the Ancestors have come to accurately pass on what the materials, colors, and dimensions of a Buddha's kesa are. Since they have actually seen and paid attention to such a kesa, they have accurately Transmitted what its great spiritual merits are and have genuinely Transmitted the Body and Mind, Bones and Marrow of the kesa of a Buddha—all of which occurs only through the actions of those in the tradition of the authentic Transmission. It is unknown to the various traditions associated with the *Āgama Scriptures*. A robe that has been established according to some personal design of the moment is not a genuinely Transmitted one, nor is it the robe of any legitimate descendant.

When our Great Master, the Tathagata Shakyamuni, conferred on Makakashō the Dharma of Supreme Wisdom—which is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching—He passed on along with It the Buddha robe. After that, the robe was received by successor after successor down to Meditation Master Daikan Enō of Mount Sōkei, spanning thirty-three generations. Each generation had personally seen and passed on what the materials, colors, and dimensions of monastic robes were to be. Our Zen tradition has long passed this information on and, as is evident today, has accepted and kept to it. In other words, that kesa which the founding Ancestors of the five branches of Chinese Zen have each accepted and kept to is what they have correctly Transmitted. It is likewise evident that there

has never been any confusion about this between any Master and his or her heir, not even in those traditions having forty, fifty, or even more generations. They have all worn and constructed the robe according to the methods of previous Buddhas, which each Buddha on His own has passed on, just as all the Buddhas have done, generation after generation, without the slightest interruption.

In the instructions of the Buddha which heir after heir has correctly passed on, the following are mentioned:

> The robe of seven panels, each comprised of three long segments and one short segment.
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> The robe of nine panels, each comprised of four long segments and one short segment.
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> The robe of eleven panels, each comprised of three long segments and one short segment.
>
> The robe of thirteen panels, each comprised of three long segments and one short segment.
>
> The robe of fifteen panels, each comprised of four long segments and one short segment.
>
> The robe of seventeen panels, each comprised of four long segments and one short segment.
>
> The robe of nineteen panels, each comprised of four long segments and one short segment.
>
> The robe of twenty-one panels, each comprised of four long segments and one short segment.
>
> The robe of twenty-three panels, each comprised of four long segments and one short segment.
>
> The robe of twenty-five panels, each comprised of four long segments and one short segment.
>
> The robe of two hundred fifty panels, each comprised of four long segments and one short segment.
>
> The robe of eighty-four thousand panels, each comprised of eight long segments and one short segment.

What I have now given you is an abbreviated list. There are, in addition, various other types of kesas which, all together, comprise the sanghati robes.

No matter whether a person is a householder or someone who has left home to be a monk, he or she accepts and keeps to the kesa. When I speak of accepting and keeping to it, I am referring to wearing it and putting it to use, not to uselessly keeping it all folded up and stored away somewhere.

Even if someone shaves their head and beard, should that person not accept and keep to the kesa, but instead hate and despise it, or be afraid of it, such a one is outside the path and will attempt to bedevil and obstruct others. As Meditation Master Hyakujō Daichi once said, "A person who has planted no good seeds in former lives will shun the kesa, despise the kesa, and both fear and despise the True Teaching."

The Buddha once said:

> Let us suppose that some person enters into Our Teaching and then commits some heavy offense or falls into false views. If, within the space of a single thought, that person shows deep reverence for the sanghati robe out of a feeling of respect, then all the Buddhas, including Myself, will surely give this person a guarantee that he or she shall realize Buddhahood from within any one of the Three Courses.* If any—be they lofty beings, or dragons, or ordinary humans, or hungry ghosts*—are able to show even the slightest respect for the spiritual merits of this person's kesa, then, once having entered any of the Three Courses, they will neither regress nor turn away from them. Suppose that there is some hungry ghost or spirit, or even any other type of sentient being. Should such a one be able to obtain even a four-inch bit of a person's kesa, he or she will have what they hunger and thirst for completely satisfied. Suppose that there are sentient beings who are about to fall into false views through having antagonistic attitudes towards each other. If they hold in mind the spiritual potential of the kesa, then, due to the influence of the kesa, they will be able, before long, to give rise to a compassionate heart and return to a state of immaculacy. Suppose that there is some person who is in military service. Should he have in his possession the smallest bit of a kesa which he respects and reverently prizes, he will undoubtedly attain spiritual liberation.

So, obviously, these spiritual merits of the kesa are peerless and beyond anything that we can imagine or conceive of. Whenever anyone has faith in this kesa, accepts it, protects it, and keeps to it, he or she will, beyond question, attain future liberation as well as a state of non-regression. This was not proclaimed by Shakyamuni Buddha alone: it has likewise been proclaimed by all Buddhas.

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We must recognize that the bodily aspect of all Buddhas is the kesa. This is why the Buddha said, "Anyone who has fallen into wicked ways will loathe the sanghati robe." Thus, whenever anyone sees a kesa and pays heed to it, should thoughts of loathing then arise, he or she should give rise to a compassionate heart, saying, "I am about to let myself fall into wicked ways," and, feeling remorse, admit to what he or she has done.

Moreover, Shakyamuni Buddha, right after He had left the royal palace on His way to entering the mountains, was forthwith presented with a sanghati robe by a tree spirit who said to Him, "If you respectfully place this robe above your head, you will avoid being disturbed by bedeviling obstructions." At that time, Shakyamuni Buddha accepted this robe and respectfully lifted it above His head, and then, it has been said, for the next twelve years until His awakening, He did not let it drop for even a moment. This is reported in the *Āgama Scriptures*.

Some say that the kesa is indeed an auspicious garment, and that anyone who makes use of it as raiment will surely arrive at an exalted spiritual rank. Speaking in more general terms, there has been no season when this sanghati robe has not existed right before us. Its manifestation at any particular time is an instance of its continual existence, and its continual existence reveals itself at some particular time within the long stretch of eons. To obtain a kesa is to obtain the banner that is the badge of Buddha. Because of this, there has not yet been any Buddha Tathagata who has not accepted and kept to the kesa. There has never been anyone who accepts and keeps to the kesa who will not realize Buddhahood.

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The Methods for Wearing a Kesa

The usual method is to keep the right shoulder bare. There is also a method for wearing a kesa over both shoulders. [You begin with the unfolded kesa held behind your back by its upper corners.] When placing the upper right and left ends atop the left arm and shoulder, bring the right corner across in front [passing it under your right arm] and drape it back over the left shoulder. You then tuck the right vertical edge between your left arm and your torso. Next, bring the left corner to the front over the left shoulder and arm, and then tuck the left vertical edge in towards the back between your arm and your torso.[6] This reflects the Buddha's

6. Dōgen's description conforms to the way in which the kesa is still being worn in the Theravadin tradition. In present-day Sōtō Zen, a clip or tie is used to hold the kesa at the left shoulder, which necessitates a slightly different procedure.

everyday behavior. It is not something that any of the shravakas* saw or heard about, nor did they pass it on, nor has a word of this leaked out from the teachings of any of the *Āgama Scriptures*. In general, the dignified procedure for wearing a kesa in the Buddha's Way is what was undoubtedly accepted and kept to by Ancestral Masters who passed on the True Teaching that was being manifested before them. Beyond question, what we accept and keep to should be what was accepted and kept to by these Ancestral Masters. Accordingly, the kesa that the Ancestors of the Buddha have correctly passed on is not something that Buddhas Transmitted to Buddhas in some haphazard manner. It is the kesa of former Buddhas and of present-day Buddhas: it is the kesa of old Buddhas and of new Buddhas. It transforms what 'the Way' means: it transforms what 'Buddha' means. It transforms the past, the present, and the future. In doing so, it makes a genuine Transmission from the past to the immediate present, from the immediate present to the future, from the immediate present to the past, from the past to the past, from present moment to present moment, from future to future, from the future to the immediate present, and from the future to the past—because it is the genuine Transmission of each Buddha on His own, just as it has been for all the Buddhas.

Because of this, starting with our Ancestral Master Bodhidharma's coming from the West and continuing through the hundreds of years of the great T'ang and Sung dynasties, there were many expert lecturers on the Scriptures who saw through what they were vainly doing. When these folks, who were involved with such things as philosophical schools and teachings on monastic rules and regulations, entered into the Buddha Dharma, they discarded their former kesa, which was a shabby old robe, and straightaway accepted the kesa that was authentically Transmitted in the Buddha's Way. The effects of their doing so are strung together, one after the other, in such works as the *Ching-te Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, the *T'ien-sheng Era Record of the Widely Illumining Lamp*, the *Supplementary Record of the Lamp*, and the *Chia-tai Era Record of the Lamp Whose Light Reaches Everywhere*. Letting go of their numerous narrow scholastic views on doctrine and monastic rules, they straightaway prized the Great Way that the Ancestors of the Buddha had Transmitted, and all became Ancestors of the Buddha. People today should also take a lesson from these Ancestral Masters of old.

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If you would accept and keep to the kesa, it must be a correctly Transmitted kesa that has been correctly Transmitted to you: it must be one that you have faith in and accept. You must not accept and keep to a spurious kesa. When I speak of that 'correctly Transmitted kesa', I am referring to the one that has been correctly

Transmitted through Shōrin-ji Monastery and Mount Sōkei:[7] this is the one that generation after generation of successors received from the Tathagata without skipping a single generation. Because of this, those engaged in the Way unmistakably accept and pass it on, relying upon the Buddha kesa being personally placed in their hands.

The Way of Buddha is straightforwardly Transmitted to the Way of Buddha: it is not left to idle people to acquire the Transmission at their leisure. There is a common saying, "Hearing about something a thousand times does not compare with a single sighting of it, and seeing something a thousand times does not compare with a single direct encounter." When we reflect on this, even if there were a thousand sightings and ten thousand hearings, they would not compare with the actual acquiring of a kesa: indeed, they could not compare with the direct Transmission of the Buddha robe. Those who may doubt that there is an authentic Transmission should doubt even more those folks who have not encountered the authentic Transmission even in their dreams. The person to whom the Buddha robe is authentically Transmitted will be more directly involved than the person who just hears someone else passing on Buddhist doctrines. And a thousand direct encounters with a robe or ten thousand acquisitions of one can never compare with a single realization of Truth. It is the Buddhas and Ancestors who have realized and given proof to the Truth. So, do not copy the stream of those ordinary, mundane students of doctrines and monastic rules.

❀

To speak more generally about the spiritual merits of the kesa in our Ancestral line: the authentic Transmission has been duly received, its original form has been passed on from person to person, and its acceptance and maintenance—along with the inherited Dharma—have continued on, unceasing, to this very day. Those who have genuinely accepted it are all Ancestral Masters whose realization of Truth has been attested to, and who Transmit the Dharma. They surpass even those who are 'thrice wise and ten times saintly'.* We should revere and respect them, bow and humbly place them above the crown of our head.[8]

Were you to trust and accept the principle of the authentic Transmission of the robe of a Buddha just once whilst in this body and mind, then that would be an indication of your encountering Buddha, and it would be the way to learn what

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7. Shōrin-ji Monastery is associated with Bodhidharma and Mount Sōkei with Daikan Enō.

8. To place them above the crown of our head means to esteem them more highly than we esteem ourselves.

Buddha is. How pitiable your life would be if you were incapable of accepting this Dharma! You should deeply affirm for yourself that, having once wrapped your body in a kesa, it serves as an amulet for safeguarding you, so that you may settle the Matter* and fully realize Spiritual Wisdom.[9] It is said that if you let a single sentence or a single poem of Scripture permeate your trusting heart, Its radiance will continually shine forth for the long stretch of eons. If you let one bit of Dharma permeate your body and mind, Its effect will be the same.

The thoughts that permeate the mind find no place of permanent abiding and are not part of us, yet their spiritual merits are completely as just described. And it is likewise with the body, which finds no abiding permanence. The kesa has no coming forth from anywhere, nor any place to which it goes. It is not something that we ourselves or any others possess, yet it manifests and dwells wherever someone keeps to it, and enlarges those who accept and hold to it. Whatever spiritual merits you may realize from it will manifest the same qualities.

The 'making' in 'making a kesa' is not the kind of 'making' that ordinary people or even saintly ones do. The import and significance of this 'making' is not something that the ten times saintly or the thrice wise will exhaustively penetrate. Those who are lacking the seeds of the Way from previous lives, though they pass through one or two lifetimes, or even immeasurable lifetimes, will not see a kesa, or hear about the kesa, or know what a kesa is. How, then, could such persons ever possibly accept and keep to one? There are people who receive spiritual merits from having the kesa touch their physical body just once, and there are people who do not. Those who have already received such merits should rejoice, and those who have not yet received them should hope to do so, since not to receive them is a pity indeed!

Whether within or outside the great-thousandfold world, only in the lineage of the Buddhas and Ancestors has the robe of Buddha been passed on, as commoners and those in lofty positions alike have universally come to know through what they have seen and heard about.

The clarification of how the robe of Buddha looks is to be found only in our Ancestral tradition; it is unknown in other traditions. Those who are ignorant of

9. This sentence, as translated, may lead some readers to an erroneous conclusion. Dōgen is not asserting that the kesa has some inherent magical property which wards off evil; rather, it protects the wearer by serving as a constant reminder of the purpose for which he or she donned the robe in the first place, as well as serving as an outer sign to others of the wearer's spiritual commitment.

this and do not feel sorry for themselves are dull-witted people indeed. Even though someone knows the eighty-four thousand meditative mantras, yet is without the genuine Transmission of the kesa, lacks the Dharma of the Buddhas and Ancestors, and has not yet clarified what the authentic Transmission of the kesa is, such a person cannot be a true heir of the Buddhas. How much people in other countries must wish that the robe of Buddha had been genuinely Transmitted to them as it was Transmitted in China! That a genuine Transmission has not been done in their countries must be a source for feelings of shame and deep regret.

Truly, to encounter the Teaching in which both the robe and the Dharma of the World-honored Tathagata is truly passed on is due to the seeds of great merit from spiritual wisdom accrued over past lives. In the world today, when the Dharma is in Its last stage and the times are wicked, there are many devilish bands of people who are unembarrassed that they have had no genuine Transmission, whereas others have been jealous of the True Transmission. Whatever they themselves may possess, wherever they may make their dwelling place, these are not their True Self. Just to authentically Transmit the True Transmission is indeed the direct path for learning what Buddha is.

❀

To speak in general terms, you need to realize that the kesa is what the Buddha Body is, and it is what the Buddha Mind is. And also, it is called ‘the garment of liberation’, ‘the robe that is a fertile field of blessings’, ‘the robe of forbearance’, ‘the formless robe’, ‘the robe of merciful compassion’, ‘the robe of the Tathagata’, and ‘the robe of supreme, fully perfected enlightenment’. By all means you should accept and keep to it in this manner.

Now in the present-day country of the great Sung dynasty, because that bunch who call themselves scholars of monastic rules and regulations are intoxicated by the wine served up by shravakas, they feel no shame that they are passing on a lineage that was unknown to their own tradition, nor do they regret it, nor are they aware of what they are doing. They have altered the kesa that has been passed down from India, which was passed on for ever so long during the Han and T’ang dynasties, acceding to one of smaller size, which complies with their small views—narrow views that they should be ashamed of. If you today were to use a small-sized robe like theirs, how could the everyday behavior of a Buddha ever continue for long? Their views take the form that they do because their exploration and passing on of the behavior of a Buddha has not been extensive. It is quite clear that the Body and Mind of the Tathagata has been correctly Transmitted only through the gates of our Ancestors and has not been disseminated through the

activities of that bunch's lineage. If, by chance, they actually recognized what the behavior of a Buddha is, they would not violate the Buddha robe. As they are still unclear as to the texts of the Scriptures, they cannot hear Their import.

❀

Further, to stipulate rough cotton cloth as the sole material for a robe is to go deeply against the Buddha's Teaching. Since such cloth is not the only thing that a disciple of the Buddha may wear, this stipulation, in particular, does violence to the Buddha robe. And why is this so? Because, by proffering a judgmental opinion concerning cotton cloth, one has violated the kesa. What a pity that the opinions of the shravakas in the Lesser Course* should so twist and turn about, sad to say! After you have demolished your opinions concerning cotton cloth, the Buddha robe can fully manifest before your eyes. What I am saying about the use of silk and cotton cloth is not what just one or two Buddhas have said: it is an important Teaching of all the Buddhas that we consider waste cloth as the highest grade of immaculate raw material for a robe. When, later on, I list the ten types of waste cloth, it will include types of silk and types of cotton, as well as other types of cloth. Are we not to collect waste bits of silk? If such is the case, then we are acting contrary to the Way of the Buddhas. If we are already prejudiced against silk, we will also be prejudiced in regard to cotton. What reason could there possibly be for feeling that we should be prejudiced in regard to silk or cotton? To look down on silk thread because it was produced through the killing of a living being is vastly laughable, for is not cotton cloth the product of a living thing? If your view of something being either sentient or non-sentient is not yet free of any commonplace, sentimental feelings, how will you possibly understand what the kesa of a Buddha is?

Also, there are those who talk in wild and confused ways, bringing up the so-called 'theory of transformed thread', which is also laughable.[10] What, pray, is not a transformation of something? You folks who bring this theory up may trust your ears when they hear the word 'transformation', but you doubt your eyes when they see a transformation. It is as if your eyes had no ears and your ears had no eyes. Where are your ears and eyes at this very moment?

Keep in mind, for the moment, that while you are picking up some waste material, there may be times when it resembles silk or when it looks just like cotton. In using it, do not call it silk or cotton; just designate it as waste material.

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10. An ancient Indian view that silk is thread which is created by a living creature; it is not naturally occurring of itself.

Because it is waste material, as waste material it is beyond being 'silk', beyond being 'cotton'. Even though there is a time after death when ordinary people and those in lofty positions may 'continue to exist' as waste matter, we cannot speak of them as 'having sentience', for they will be 'waste material'. Even though there is a time when a dead pine tree or chrysanthemum have become waste matter, we cannot speak of them as being 'non-sentient', for they will be 'waste material'. When we understand the principle that waste cloth is neither silk nor cotton, and that it is far from being either pearls or jade, the robe of waste cloth will fully manifest before us, and, with its arising, we will meet and experience the robe of waste cloth. When your opinions about silk and cotton have not yet dried up and fallen away, you will not see 'waste material' even in your dreams. Although for your whole life you may accept and keep to a kesa made from coarse cotton cloth, should you hold in your mind the view that it <u>is</u> cotton, what you have accepted will not be the genuine Transmission of the Buddha robe.

❀

Further, among the various kinds of kesas, there are cotton kesas, and silk kesas, and leather kesas. Buddhas have all made use of each of these at some time, for these have the Buddhist merits of a Buddha robe. They possess the fundamental principle that has been genuinely Transmitted without ever having been interrupted. However, those folks who have not yet discarded their commonplace, sentimental feelings treat the Buddha's Dharma lightly and do not trust the Buddha's words. They aim at following where others have gone based on commonplace, sentimental feelings, and we should certainly speak of them as non-Buddhists who have latched onto the Buddha's Dharma. They are a bunch that would demolish the True Teaching.

Some have claimed that they altered the Buddha's robe based on instructions from a celestial being. If this is so, then they must be aspiring to celestial Buddhahood! Or have they become part of some stream of celestial beings? Disciples of the Buddha will expound the Buddha's Teaching to celestial beings; they do not ask celestial beings what the Way is. How sad that those who lack the True Transmission of the Buddha's Dharma are like this!

The perspective of the host of celestial beings and the perspective of a disciple of the Buddha are vastly different in both large and small matters, yet celestial beings come down to ask disciples of the Buddha for the Teaching. This is because the Buddhist perspective and the celestial perspective are so vastly different. Chuck out the narrow-minded perspectives of scholastics and shravakas, and do not study them: recognize that such persons are of the Lesser Course. The

Buddha said, "Such folks may indeed feel remorse for having killed father or mother, but they may well not feel remorse for having slandered the Dharma."

In sum, the path of small-mindedness and foxy suspiciousness is not what the Buddha intended for us to follow. The Great Path of the Buddha's Dharma is beyond anything that the Lesser Course can reach. No one outside the Ancestral Path that is connected with the Treasure House of the Dharma even knows of the way that all Buddhas correctly Transmit the Great Precepts.

❀

Long ago on Mount Ōbai, in the middle of the night, the robe and the Dharma of the Buddhas were genuinely Transmitted upon the head of Daikan Enō, our Sixth Ancestor. This was truly the authentic Transmission of the passing on of the Dharma and the passing on of the robe. It occurred because the Fifth Ancestor 'knew his man'. Fellows who have realized any of the four stages* of arhathood, or those who are thrice wise and ten times saintly, or are academic teachers of philosophical theories or of Scriptural doctrines might well have conferred the robe on Jinshū, but they would not have passed it on to the Sixth Ancestor.[11] Even so, because an Ancestor of the Buddha, in singling out a Buddhist Ancestor, crosses beyond the well-trodden road of commonplace thinking, the Sixth Ancestor had already become the Sixth Ancestor. Keep in mind that the principle of descendant after descendant of Buddhist Ancestors 'recognizing his or her man' by recognizing the True Self is not something that can be left to those who weigh and measure things.

> A certain monk once asked the Sixth Ancestor, "Is the robe passed on to you on Mount Ōbai in the middle of the night one made of cotton, or one made of silk, or one made of taffeta? Pray, tell us, what on earth is it made of?"
>
> The Sixth Ancestor replied, "It is not cotton, or silk, or taffeta."

This was the way that the Highest Ancestor of Mount Sōkei put it. Keep in mind that the Buddha robe is not silk, or cotton, or some fine quality broadcloth. Those who vainly judge it to be silk, or cotton, or some fine-quality broadcloth are folks that slander the Buddha's Dharma. How could they possibly recognize the kesa of a Buddha? Moreover, there is the occasion when people come in good faith to take

11. Jinshū was the most intellectually gifted and respected monk in the Fifth Ancestor's monastic assembly, and the one who all his fellow monks assumed would be named the Fifth Ancestor's Dharma heir.

the Precepts. The kesa they obtain, again, is beyond any discussion of silk or cotton: it is the Buddha's instruction in the Way of Buddhas.

Also, Shōnawashu's robe was an everyday garment when he was in lay life.[12] When he left home to be a monk, it became a kesa. This principle should be calmly considered and concentrated upon. It is not something that you should disregard, acting as if you had neither seen nor heard of it. Moreover, it has an import that comes with the True Transmission of Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor. That bunch who tot up words cannot perceive it, nor can they weigh and measure it. Truly, how could the thousands of shifts and the myriad variations in the way that a Buddha says things possibly be in the realm where commonplace thinking flows? Yes, there are meditative states and mantric prayers, but those fellows who tot up grains of sand cannot see the precious Pearl that lies beneath the robe.

❀

Now, we should take the materials, colors, and dimensions of the kesa that the Buddhas and Ancestors have genuinely Transmitted to be the true standard for the kesa of all Buddhas. From India to the lands in the east, examples of it have long existed. Those who distinguished the true from the false had already gone beyond the experience of realizing Truth. Although there were those outside the Ancestral Path who used the word 'kesa', none of the original Ancestors ever affirmed them as their offshoots, so how could they possibly germinate the seeds that produce the roots of virtue, much less the fruits of it? Not only are you now seeing and hearing the Buddha Dharma that those others had not encountered over vast eons, you are also able to see and hear about the Buddha robe, to learn about the Buddha robe, and to both accept and keep to the Buddha robe. This is precisely our respectfully encountering Buddha. We are hearing the voice of Buddha, and are pouring forth the radiance of Buddha, and are accepting and making use of what a Buddha accepts and utilizes. We are transmitting one-to-one the Mind of Buddha, and are obtaining the Marrow of Buddha.

❀

The Transmission of the Robe

Whilst I was in Sung China doing my training on the long bench in the Meditation Hall, I noticed that at the first light of every day, following the striking of the wake-up block, the monks who sat on either side of me would raise their

12. His name means 'He of Hempen Robe'.

folded kesa in a gesture of offering, place it atop their head, respectfully make gasshō,* and recite a verse to themselves. On one occasion I had a feeling that I had not experienced before. A joy filled my body to overflowing; tears of gratitude, stealing from my eyes, rolled down my cheeks and soaked my collar. I had been reading the *Āgama Scripture* and, though I had seen the passage on humbly offering up the kesa above one's head, its relevance had not wholly dawned on me. Now I was personally witnessing it. In this connection, sad to say, was the thought that, when I was in my native land, there had been no teacher or any good spiritual companion to instruct me in this. How could I not regret the days and years I had so wastefully spent, or not grieve their passing? But now I was seeing and hearing this and was able to rejoice because of some good deed done in a past life. If I had vainly spent my time rubbing shoulders with any of those in the temples in my native land, I could not possibly have sat shoulder-to-shoulder with these Treasures of the Sangha who had donned the Buddha robe. My joy and sorrow were not unmixed, as my myriad tears issued forth.

Then, in silence, I took a vow, "Somehow, be I ever so incompetent, I will correctly Transmit the true inheritance of the Buddha's Dharma and, out of pity for the sentient beings in my homeland, I will help them see the robe and hear the Dharma that Buddha after Buddha has authentically Transmitted. Should my steadfast faith come to my aid in some unseen way, then surely my heartfelt vow will not have been in vain."

Disciples of the Buddha who are now accepting the kesa and keeping to it should humbly raise it above their head and unfailingly strive, day and night, to amass the effects of training, for this will produce real spiritual merits. The reading or hearing of one sentence or one poem from Scripture may well be as common as trees and stones, whereas the spiritual merits from the genuine Transmission of the kesa are undoubtedly difficult to encounter anywhere throughout the ten directions.

❀

In Great Sung China during the wintry tenth lunar month of the seventeenth year of the Chia-ting era (November, 1223), there were two Korean monks who came to Ch'ing-yüen Prefecture. One was called, in Chinese, Chi-hüen, and the other Ching-yün. These two incessantly talked about the meaning of Buddhist doctrine and were, moreover, men of letters. Even so, they had no kesa or alms bowl and were like ordinary folk. Sad to say, even though they had the superficial form of monks, they lacked the Dharma of monks, which may have been due to their being from a small, remote country. When those fellows from our own court

who have the superficial form of monks take to going to other countries, they are probably just like these two monks.

Shakyamuni Buddha, before His enlightenment, had already humbly raised the kesa above His head for some twelve years, never neglecting it. As His distant descendants, you should investigate this. If you turn away from bowing to celestial beings, spirits, rulers or their ministers—since all such bowing is done in the vain pursuit of fame and gain—and turn towards humbly placing the Buddha robe atop your head, it will be a great joy in which we can rejoice.

Recorded on the first day of winter in the first year of the Ninji era (October 17, 1240) at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple.

The mendicant monk Dōgen
who entered Sung China
in order to receive and Transmit the Dharma.

For robe material to make a kesa, we use that which is immaculate. 'Immaculate' refers to robe material donated in veneration as an offering in pure faith, or something purchased in the market place by lay folk, or something sent you by the gentry, or the pure alms-gift of some spiritually empowered dragon, or the pure alms-gift of some fiercely protective guardian, all of which are robe materials we use. And pure alms-gifts from rulers and their chief ministers or pure pelts can also be used.[13]

Further, we consider ten types of waste cloth to be immaculate:

First, cloth chewed by an ox.
Second, cloth gnawed by rats.
Third, cloth singed by fire.
Fourth, menstrual cloth.
Fifth, cloth discarded from childbirthing.
Sixth, cloth abandoned at a wayside shrine for birds to peck apart.
Seventh, cloth from a dead person's clothing abandoned at a grave site.
Eighth, cloth from abandoned prayer flags.

13. 'Pure pelts' probably refers to skins taken from animals who died naturally or by accident, or were attained as a by-product, as distinct from those specifically hunted for their pelts.

Ninth, cloth from robes discarded by officials upon their advancement to higher rank.
Tenth, burial shrouds discarded by those returning from a funeral.

We consider these ten types to be robe material that is especially immaculate. Those in the world of common customs discard them: those on the Buddha's Path make use of them. From these everyday ways of working with things, we can realize the difference between the mundane road and the Buddha's Path. As a consequence, when we search for the immaculate, we should seek out these ten types of cloth. When we obtain them, we should recognize what is clean and distinguish it from what is unclean, just as we can recognize mind and distinguish it from body. When we obtain any of these ten types of cloth—whether of silk or of cotton—it is its cleanliness or lack of cleanliness that we should consider.

It would be the height of silliness to hold to the notion that this waste cloth is being used simply to create 'the shabby appearance of a raggle-taggle robe'. The kesa of waste cloth is something that we in the Buddha's Way have come to use for clothing ourselves on account of its splendor and singular loveliness. When it comes to what would be considered raggle-taggle clothing from the perspective of the Buddha's Way, what we would call 'raggle-taggle' is the impure aspect of a garment fabricated from brocaded or embroidered cloth, from fancy-patterned cloth or silk gauze, or from gold or silver cloth studded with pearls and jade.[14]

Speaking more generally, in the Buddhism of this land or of other countries, when we use what is immaculate and wondrously lovely, it should be of those ten types, for not only do they transcend the limits of what is clean and what is unclean, they also go beyond the realm of what is tainted with delusion and what is not tainted with delusion. Do not discuss them in terms of mind and matter; they are things unconnected with gain and loss. Simply, those who accept and keep to what has been genuinely Transmitted are Ancestors of the Buddha. When someone is an Ancestor of the Buddha, we accept and keep to this person as an Ancestor of the Buddha, for he or she has accepted, and is passing on, the genuine Transmission. And this Transmission does not depend on what is or is not

14. What makes such garments 'impure' is the discriminatory attitude towards them that extols whatever is deemed rich or costly. 'Raggle-taggle' from the Buddhist perspective therefore does not refer to the quality or 'look' of a garment, but to a discriminatory attitude of mind about the cloth from which it is made.

manifested by the body, nor does it depend on what is or is not offered up by the mind.

We should lament that in this country of Japan, for ever so long up to recent times, male and female monks have not worn the kesa, and we should rejoice that they now may accept and keep to one. Any householder, male or female, who can accept the Buddhist Precepts should don a kesa of five, seven, or nine panels. How much more should those who have left home to be monks do so! Why would they not wear one? It is said that everyone—from Lord Brahma and those in the six worlds below him, down to male and female prostitutes and those in forced servitude—can receive the Buddhist Precepts and don the kesa, so are there male and female monks who would not wear one? It is said that even animals can take the Buddha's Precepts and put on a kesa, so why would a disciple of the Buddha not don the Buddha robe?

Thus, those who would become a disciple of the Buddha—be they denizens of some heavenly state, ordinary folk, rulers of nations, or government officials, or be they laity, monks, those in forced servitude, or animals—should all accept the Buddha's Precepts and have the kesa correctly Transmitted to them. This is indeed the straight path for correctly entering the ranks of Buddha.

❀

When washing and rinsing a kesa, mix various sorts of incense powders into the water. After it has dried out, fold it up, place it in an elevated place, make a venerative offering of incense and flowers, and bow three times. After that, kneel before it and, with hands in gasshō, humbly place it atop your head, and then, rousing your faith, intone the following verse:

How great and wondrous is the robe of enlightenment,
Formless and embracing every treasure!
I wish to unfold the Buddha's Teaching
That I may help all sentient beings reach the Other Shore.

After reciting this three times, stand up, reverently unfold the robe, and put it on.

13

On the Spiritual Discourses of the Mountains and the Water

(Sansuikyō)

Translator's Introduction: If readers are not already familiar with the Zen Buddhist use of metaphorical language, they may find the following comments useful in grasping what Dōgen is talking about in this Dharma discourse, which is baffling if its terms are taken only in their literal sense.

It has been said that when the Sanskrit word *dhyāna*, meaning 'meditation' in the Zen Buddhist sense, was introduced into China, the Chinese had no word that was its equivalent, so the Sanskrit word was spelled out by using two Chinese characters according to their pronunciation: *chan-na* (pronounced like English 'john-nah'). Over time, the term was shortened and the Mandarin pronunciation altered slightly to *ch'an* (pronounced like 'tchahn'). In Japan, this character was pronounced as *zen*. Although there were other Chinese characters that had already been used for transliterating the Sanskrit sound *dhyā*, the one chosen in the present instance also carried an ancient meaning, one relevant to Dōgen's discourse: 'to bow respectfully to mountains and flowing water'.

In the present discourse, Dōgen takes up the difference between the general, conventional use of the terms 'mountain' and '(flowing) water' and their special use by the Chinese Zen Masters for pointing to spiritual matters. As previously indicated in notes to Dōgen's earlier Dharma discourses, the term 'mountain' has several implications in Zen contexts. In this discourse in particular, 'mountain' is most often used as a descriptive epithet for one who is sitting in meditation, as still as a mountain among mountains (that is, one who is training among other members of the Buddhist Sangha), as well as for a wise and saintly person whose path has led him or her to seek a spiritual abode in a mountain, in both a literal and a figurative sense. Hence, the Chinese Zen Masters are referred to as 'mountains', and because their training never comes to an end but is ever green, they are referred to as 'verdant mountains'. And because they are not rigid or static in their practice, they are sometimes referred to as 'flowing mountains'.

One of the meanings of 'water', in the Zen sense, is 'the Water of the Spirit', that is, Buddha Nature in general as well as one's own Buddha Nature. In this translation, the use of this term is rendered as 'the Water' where context makes the meaning unambiguous. Someone's 'walking on the water' is thus descriptive of that person's doing his training and practice by following the ever-shifting, ever-flowing path of Buddha Nature.

Dōgen does not always signal which of the various meanings of 'mountain' and 'water' he intends, but often keeps his references fluid. Thus, as with his Discourse 11: On 'Just for the Time Being, Just for a While…' *(Uji)*, readers may find it worthwhile to read this chapter through twice, once referring to the footnotes to get the immediate sense, and then just reading it to experience the flow.

The 'mountains and water' of which I am speaking at the present moment are a manifestation of the words and ways of former Buddhas.[1] Both terms, residing in their place within the Dharma, have completely fulfilled their function for these Buddhas. Because these words signify conditions that actively exist in the time periods before these Buddhas disappeared into the realm of spiritual Emptiness,[2] they refer to something that exists here and now, and because they signify the Self before any sign of these Buddhas' existence has appeared, they transcend anything that manifests before our very eyes. The various spiritual merits of the mountains are so vast and far reaching that the merits from our practice of 'riding the clouds' will certainly be attained because of the mountains.[3] The wondrous effects from our 'going on with the wind to our back', beyond doubt, will liberate us, thanks to the mountains.[4]

❀

The monk Dōkai of Mount Daiyō, in instructing his assembly, said, "The verdant mountains are constantly moving on, and the Stone Maiden, in the dark of night, gives birth to Her Child."[5] The mountains are never lacking in the spiritual

1. That is, 'mountains' and 'water' are not only terms used by previous Masters but also, as metaphors, can embody the way in which these Masters functioned.

2. Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett often referred to this 'emptiness' as "the fullest emptiness you can ever experience." She herself used the term 'the Immaculacy of Emptiness' to describe It in a way that did not contain a connotation of a negative and 'devoid' sort of emptiness.

3. 'Riding the clouds'—originally, a Taoist term—refers to rising to higher levels. Here, it probably refers to trainees realizing higher spiritual levels, thanks to the Buddhas and the Ancestors, as well as to one's fellow trainees.

4. 'Going on with the wind to our back'—another Taoist term—refers to being supported by a favorable tailwind, again, probably to be understood as spiritual help and support from the Sangha.

5. To paraphrase the first half, Buddhist Masters who are literally, or figuratively, always 'sitting' in meditation (the mountains) and whose training and practice is 'alive' (verdant) are constantly moving on (or, more literally, 'progressing apace'), 'always becoming Buddha'. The second phrase has multiple meanings which arise from the resonance of the saying. For example, on one level, the epithet 'The Stone Maiden' refers to That Which Is, from which all things arise, without having to depend on any external 'impregnating' agent and without the process being visible (happening 'in the dark of night'). On another level, the Stone Maiden refers to the trainee whose intent to realize Truth is active, but whose mind is as hard as rock. Yet, despite this hardness, it will, through training, crack open, and the Child of Enlightenment will be born.

merits with which they are undoubtedly endowed. This is why they constantly reside at ease and are constantly moving on. By all means, you must examine in great detail the spiritual merits of their moving on. The moving on of a mountain will be just like the moving on of those who wander through life in ignorance,[6] so, even though you may think that it seems the same as the human activity of walking, nevertheless, do not doubt 'the moving on' of mountains.

What this Ancestor of the Buddha expressed has already pointed to this 'moving on'; this was his 'getting to the very root of the Matter'.* So, you should thoroughly pursue what he was pointing out to his assembly about 'always moving on'. Since it is a 'moving on', it is constant. Although the moving on of the verdant mountains is more swift than the wind, those who live amidst the mountains do not perceive this, much less recognize it. 'Being amidst the mountains' refers to things blossoming forth within the everyday world. Those who live apart from the mountains neither perceive nor recognize them. They are people who lack an eye for seeing mountains: not only do they not perceive or recognize them, they do not see or hear them, nor do they comprehend what they are all about. Whoever harbors doubts about the moving on of mountains is one who does not yet recognize his own moving on. It is not that they themselves do not move on, it is that they do not yet recognize their own moving on and have not clarified what it is. To recognize your own moving on will certainly be no different from recognizing the moving on of the verdant mountains.

A verdant mountain is already beyond being 'sentient' and beyond being 'non-sentient': you yourself are already beyond being 'sentient' and beyond being 'non-sentient'. So, you must not harbor doubts about the moving on of the verdant mountains at the present moment. People do not know that they must scrutinize and clarify what 'verdant mountains' means if they are to measure all the existent worlds about them.

It is necessary to scrutinize what 'the moving on of mountains' signifies. You have to look with utmost care at both 'stepping forward' and 'stepping back'. You need to carefully explore moving on—both the steps that move you forward and those that move you back—and never cease in this for even a moment, from the time before there is any sign of something coming into existence until the Lord of Emptiness* appears.

If this 'moving on' had come to rest, the Buddhas and Ancestors would never have appeared. If this 'moving on' had reached some culminating point, the

6. That is, without any preconceived notion or plan.

* See *Glossary.*

Dharma of the Buddha would not have reached us today. Stepping forward has not ceased, nor has stepping back. When there is a stepping forward, it does not stand in opposition to stepping back; when there is a stepping back, it does not stand in opposition to stepping forward. We characterize this as 'the mountain's flowing' or as 'the flowing mountain'.

Because a verdant mountain trains in order to master 'moving on' and Enō learned through practice to 'go walking upon the Water',[7] your learning these things through your practice is synonymous with a mountain's learning them through practice. Without the mountains' altering their body or mind, they have been going all around and about, learning through practice, with the look of a mountain about them.

Do not slander the mountains by saying, "Verdant mountains are incapable of moving on," or "No mountain to the east of us is capable of walking upon water." It is because of the baseness of some people's views of things that they doubt the phrase 'mountains walk on', just as it is due to their inexperience and scant knowledge that they are startled by the words 'a flowing mountain'. Nowadays, although we may say that they have not thoroughly explored even the phrase 'flowing water' in all its varied meanings, it is actually just a matter of their being immersed in pedestrian views and drowning in ignorance. As a result, they take as their form and name, or as their very lifeblood, whatever they esteem as their 'cumulative qualities'. Its walking on exists; its flowing exists. There is a time when a mountain gives rise to the Child of the Mountain. In accordance with the principle that a mountain becomes an Ancestor of the Buddha, the Ancestors of the Buddha have made Their appearance in this manner.

When people have eyes before which a mountain is manifesting as grass and trees, earth and stones, or walls and fences, they do not doubt what they see nor are they disturbed by it, and it is not the whole of what is manifesting. Even though a time may occur when a mountain appears to them as being adorned with the Seven Treasures,* this is not the real refuge. Even if they see manifesting before them the realm in which all the Buddhas are carrying out the Way, it is never a place to crave for. Even if they have above their heads the sight of a mountain manifesting the indescribable spiritual virtues of all the Buddhas, Truth is not limited merely to

7. This phrase would be conventionally translated as 'The mountain to the east of us goes walking upon water', but the reference is actually to a well-known Zen saying that Dōgen discusses later, "Tōzan goes walking upon the Water." Tōzan ('The East Mountain') was an epithet for the Sixth Chinese Ancestor Daikan Enō; it is unrelated to the name Tōzan, meaning 'Cave Mountain', by which several other monks are known, such as Tōzan Ryōkai.

this. The fully visible manifestation of each and every thing is the physical body of each and every thing along with the environment in which it exists. So, such views as those above are not to be taken as the manner in which Ancestors of the Buddha put the Way into practice: they are merely what people can see when looking through a hollow straw.

Splitting 'subjective' mind apart from 'objective' environment is what the Great Sage Shakyamuni warned us about; intellectually expounding on 'mind' or expounding on 'nature' is not something that Ancestors of the Buddha undertake. Having theories about mind or about nature is a profession for those who are apart from the Buddhist Way; to be bogged down in words and phrases is not speech that leads to liberation. There is a state that is free from such conditions as these. It has been described as "The verdant mountains are constantly moving on," and as "Enō went walking upon the Water." You need to explore this state in the greatest detail.

❀

The statement "The Stone Maiden, in the dark of night, gives birth to Her Child" refers to the time when the Stone Maiden gives birth to Her Child as 'in the dark of night'. Generally speaking, there are stones that are male and stones that are female, as well as stones that are neither male nor female, and all of these quite nicely fill up the heavens and fill up the earth. And there are heavenly stones and there are earthly stones, which those who wander without a preconceived goal speak of, though persons who really know them are rare indeed.[8]

One needs to understand the principle of Her 'giving birth to a Child'. At the time of Her giving birth to the Child, are Parent and Child made separate? You must devote yourself to exploring through your training not only that 'the Child becoming the Parent' is the full manifestation of 'giving birth to the Child', but also that 'the time when the Parent becomes the Child' is the full manifestation of 'giving birth to the Child'. You must thoroughly penetrate what is being said here.

❀

Great Teacher Ummon Bun'en once said, "Enō went walking upon the Water." The meaning of what is fully manifested through these words is that all

8. To paraphrase one level of meaning, male and female stones refer to those who are 'Stone Maiden' trainees as explained in footnote 5. These 'stones', as well as conventional stones, occur in both heavenly and earthly worlds. Though people may speak of spiritually developed beings as heavenly ('beings spiritually beyond me') or as earthly ('real people'), those who can actually distinguish between them are rare indeed.

mountains are Enō, and every Enō goes walking upon the Water. This is why this Ancestor of the Buddha fully manifested Mount Sumeru amidst the nine mountains, and fully realized It through his training, along with realizing other things as well.[9] People call him Enō. But how could there possibly be the slightest gap between Ummon's and Enō's Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow, or between Ummon and his living within his own realization through training?

❀

In the nation of Great Sung China today, there is a certain type of unreliable person that has now grown to be quite a crowd. They have gotten to the point where they cannot be bested by the few true people. This bunch says such things as the following:

> Just like the comments about Enō's walking on water or the one about Nansen's buying a scythe, what is being said is beyond anything that reason can grasp. In other words, any remark that involves the use of intellect is not the Zen talk of an Ancestor of the Buddha, whereas a remark that goes beyond anything that reason can handle is what comprises a 'remark' by an Ancestor of the Buddha. As a consequence, we would say that Meditation Master Ōbaku's applying a stick to his disciples or Meditation Master Rinzai's giving forth with a loud yell go far beyond rational understanding and do not involve the use of intellect. We consider this to be what is meant by the great awakening to That which precedes the arising of any discrimination. The reason why the ancient virtuous Masters so often made skillful use of verbal phrases to cut through the spiritual entanglements of their disciples was precisely because these phrases were beyond rational understanding.

Fellows who talk like this have never met a genuine teacher, nor do they have an eye for learning through training. They are foolish puppies who are not even worth discussing. For the past two or three centuries in the land of Sung China, such devilish imps and 'little shavers' like the Gang of Six have been many.[10] Alas, the Great Way of the Buddha's Ancestors has become diseased! This

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9. A reference to the eight symbolic concentric rings of mountains with Mount Sumeru as their center, a metaphor for having achieved a full centering of oneself within one's meditation.

10. 'The Gang of Six' refers to six monks during the Buddha's time whose wayward behavior prompted the framing of monastic rules and regulations. 'Little shavers' was a term applied

explanation of those people cannot compare even with that of the shravakas* who follow the Lesser Course;* it is even more confused than that of non-Buddhists. These fellows are not laity nor are they monks; they are not gods or humans. And when it comes to exploring the Buddha's Way, they are more befuddled than beasts. The stories which the 'little shavers' refer to as going beyond anything that reason can grasp only go beyond anything their reason can grasp: it was not that way for any Ancestor of the Buddha. Just because they said that such stories are not subject to rational understanding, you should not fail to learn through your training what the intellectually comprehendible pathways of the Ancestors of the Buddha are. Even if these stories were ultimately beyond rational understanding, the understanding that this bunch has cannot hit the mark. Such people are in great number everywhere in Sung China, as I have personally witnessed. Sad to say, they did not recognize that the phrase 'the use of intellect' is itself a use of words, nor realize that a use of words may liberate us from the use of our intellect. When I was in Sung China, even though I laughed at them for their foolish views, they had nothing to say for themselves; they were simply speechless. Their present negation of rational understanding is nothing but an erroneous view. Who taught them this? Even though you may say that they have not had someone to teach them of the true nature of things, nevertheless, the fact remains that, for all intents and purposes, they still end up being offspring of the non-Buddhist notion that things arise spontaneously, independent of any form of causality.

❀

You need to recognize that Enō's walking on the Water is the Bones and Marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Various kinds of water manifested under Enō's feet. This is why various mountains ride the clouds or tread the heavens. Above the crests of various types of water are various types of mountains which go walking up and down on the Water. As the various mountains go walking through the various types of water, the tips of their feet often make the water dance; thus, their walking may go seven steps in one direction or eight in another.[11] That is, there is no time when training and enlightenment do not exist.

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to monks who shaved their heads so that they could partake of monastic food and lodging, but who had no interest in spiritual training.

11. That is, 'mountains' are able to move about freely in their daily training.

❀

As for the Water, It is neither strong nor weak, nor is It wet or dry, nor does It move or stay still, nor is It cold or hot, nor does It exist or not exist, nor is It deluded or awakened. When frozen solid, It is harder than a diamond, so who can smash It? When melted, It is more yielding than diluted milk, so who can tear It to bits? This being so, we cannot doubt the qualities of the various forms of existence that manifest before our very eyes.

For now, just concentrate on learning to recognize, through your training, the moments when you are able to open your eyes and see the Water in the whole universe as the Whole Universe. And 'learning through training' does not refer just to the times when ordinary people or those in loftier positions see the Water; there is your learning through training in which the Water sees the Water. Because the Water puts the Water into practice in order to realize what the Water is, there will be your thorough investigation of the Water's expressing through words what the Water is. In this way, you will manifest the pathway upon which we ourselves meet our Self. Until then, you must go back and forth on that road of life upon which others are all involved with making a study of 'other', until you leap free.

❀

To speak in general, what people see as a mountain or as water differs in various ways. There are those who, upon catching sight of what I am calling 'the Water', see It as a string of pearls, but they fail to see such a necklace as the Water.[12] They undoubtedly consider the form in which we humans perceive something as what the Water is. What they see as a pearl necklace, I see as the Water. And there are those who see the Water as a wondrous flower, but this does not mean that they are using an actual flower for the Water. Hungry ghosts,* upon encountering the Water, may see It as a raging inferno, or as thick, congealing blood. Dragons and other denizens of the deep may see It as a palace or as a stately mansion. Some may see It as the Seven Treasures or as the Wish-fulfilling Jewel,[13] and others as various sorts of trees, or as fences and walls, and others as the

12. For instance, they may see someone's Buddha Nature as being a beautiful adornment, not as that person's true, innate nature.

13. The Wish-fulfilling Jewel, sometimes called the Mani Jewel, refers to the Buddha Nature which is inherent in all living beings. Meditation Master Gensha Shibi called it "The One Bright Pearl". Dōgen discusses this at length in Discourse 4: On 'The One Bright Pearl' *(Ikka Myōju)*.

immaculate, liberated Dharma Nature, and others as someone's True Body, and others as someone's physical appearance along with that person's mental nature. When humans see the Water via any of these means, this can be the cause of their liberation from commonplace 'life'.

Although what is seen may differ completely according to the one who sees It, we should not be too hasty in accepting this as absolutely so. Are there really 'all sorts of ways' of seeing any single object? Have you committed an error by taking the plethora of images for what is actually one object? Then, at the very peak of your efforts, you will need to make a further effort. If what I have just been saying is so, then, likewise, there cannot be just one or two ways for training to realize the Truth and for assiduously practicing the Way, and the realm of the Ultimate can be of a thousand kinds and ten thousand sorts.

Further, when we think about the fundamental meaning of this, even though we may say that the varieties of the Water are many, it may seem to some as if there were no one, fundamental Water or as though the Water had no variety. Thus, the various ways in which the Water appears do not depend on one's mind or on one's body, nor do they arise from one's karma*-producing actions, nor do they depend on oneself or on someone else: they possess that freedom from delusion which is dependent on the Water Itself. Thus, the Water is beyond being earth, water, fire, wind, space, or consciousness, beyond being blue, yellow, red, white, or black, beyond being form, sound, odor, taste, sensations, or thoughts, and even so, the Water naturally manifests fully as earth, water, fire, wind, and so forth.

Because this is the way things are, it would be difficult to say clearly what has created our nation and its palaces as they appear before us today or to say what they will be made into. To say that they depend on the Wheel of Space and the Wheel of Wind is not what is true for me or true for others, for it is the product of speculation based on the suppositions of a narrow outlook.[14] This view has been asserted based on some people's thinking that nothing could continue to exist if it did not have some place to hang onto. The Buddha said, "All thoughts and things are ultimately free of any attachments, so there is no place where they permanently abide." You need to keep in mind that even though all thoughts and things are inherently free of any attachments, they do have some place where they exist.

14. According to an ancient Indian view, the universe is comprised of the five elements (referred to here as 'Wheels'), with the more solid elements being dependent on the less solid, the Wheel of Wind (i.e., gaseous matter) and the Wheel of Space being the least substantial.

❀

When human beings look at water, they only see it as something that ceaselessly pours out and flows on. This flowing has many forms, each being a part of the human perspective. It flows over the earth and out of the sky, now surging upwards, now pouring downwards, streaming along in the bends of a river and coursing through deep chasms. It rises up to make clouds and comes down to form pools.

The Chinese scholar Wen-tsu once remarked, "It is the way of water to rise up to the heavens and become rain and dew, and to fall to earth and become rivers and streams." Today, those who wander in ignorance still speak in this manner. It would be most shameful for those who call themselves the offspring of the Buddha's Ancestors to be more in the dark about the meaning of this than such folk as these, for what he is really saying is "The way of the Water is not something that water is aware of, yet water is fully capable of functioning, and it is not something that the Water is not aware of, yet the Water is fully capable of functioning."

As Wen-tsu said, "It rises up to the heavens and becomes rain and dew." Be aware that the Water ascends to ever so many lofty places in the heavens above to form rain and dew, and rain and dew take a variety of forms according to the worlds in which they appear. To say that there is some place that the Water does not reach is a teaching of the shravakas of the Lesser Vehicle or an erroneous teaching of non-Buddhists.[15] The Water extends into the tongues of fire, and into our thoughts and deliberations and distinctions, and into our perceptions, and into our Buddha Nature.

Consider the statement, "It falls to earth and becomes rivers and streams." When the Water descends to earth, It becomes rivers and streams. Some varieties of rivers and streams frequently turn into wise, perceptive persons. In the opinion of the everyday stream of the ordinary and the befuddled, water is unquestionably that which exists in rivers, streams, oceans, and seas. This is not so, for the rivers and seas have come into existence within the Water. Thus, there is the Water even in places where there are no rivers or seas. It is just that when the Water descends to earth, It creates the effect of 'rivers and seas'.

Also, do not work it out that, when there is some place where the Water has formed rivers and seas, there are no social worlds or Buddhist lands. Even in a single drop, immeasurable Buddhist lands manifest before our very eyes. Hence, it

15. This is a reference to the mistaken notion of an *icchantika*, that is, someone who is believed to be totally devoid of Buddha Nature.

is not a question of water existing within a Buddhist land or of a Buddhist land existing in the Water. The existence of the Water is in no way dependent on the three temporal worlds or on the worlds of thoughts and things. Even so, the Water is the spiritual question that manifests before our very eyes. Wherever Buddhas and Ancestors go, the Water invariably goes. Wherever the Water goes, Buddhas and Ancestors invariably manifest. Because of this, Buddhas and Ancestors have always regarded the Water as Their body and mind, as Their very thoughts.

Since the preceding is so, there is no document within or outside Buddhism that says that the Water does not run upwards. The path of the Water circulates every which way—up above and down below, far and wide. So, within Buddhist Scriptures, it is said that fire and wind climb up above, earth and water go down below. This 'up above and down below' is something to investigate in particular. Consider carefully the 'up above and down below' of the Buddha's Way. It means that the place where earth and water go is 'down below'; it does not mean that down below is some 'place' where earth and water go.[16] Where fire and wind go is up above. Even though the universe of thoughts and things does not completely depend on the measurements of the four directions, or upon up and down, we temporarily fabricate our universe in accordance with the four, five, or six elements.[17] The Heaven Beyond Deliberate Thought is not always 'up above'; the Hell of Incessant Suffering is not always 'down below'. Incessant suffering is one person's whole universe; being beyond deliberate thought is another person's whole universe.

Hence, when a dragon or a fish views water as a palace, it will not be like a human being seeing a palace, nor will such a creature perceive the water to be something that is flowing on. Were some onlooker to say to the dragon or the fish, "Your palace is flowing water," the creature would at once be startled and filled with doubt, just as some of you may have been startled earlier when you heard it asserted that mountains flow like water. Further, it may be possible to maintain that a similar assertion can be made about the railings, steps, and pillars of palaces and mansions. Calmly consider this principle and keep turning it about in your mind, for if you do not learn how to go beyond these borderline expressions, you will not let go of the body and mind of one who wanders in ignorance, or fully realize what the domain of the Buddhas and Ancestors is, or fully realize what the domain of

16. That is, 'down below' refers to a direction, not to any specific place.

17. The four elements are earth, water, fire, and wind; the five are the four elements plus space; the six are the five elements plus consciousness.

those who wander in ignorance is, or fully realize what the palace of one who wanders in ignorance really is.

Now, we humans may clearly perceive the very essence of the sea or the very heart of a river to be water, but what sort of thing a dragon or a fish may perceive to be water, or may make use of as water, we do not yet know. Do not foolishly assume that other creatures make use of water in accordance with how we perceive water.

Now, when we Buddhist trainees learn about the Water, we should not blindly cling to just the everyday, human view of water; we need to go on and investigate through our practice the Water of the Buddha's Way. How we view the term 'Water' as used by the Ancestors of the Buddha is something we need to investigate through our practice. We also need to investigate through our practice whether or not the Water actually exists within the traditional families of the Buddha's Ancestors.

❀

The mountain, from times immemorial, has served as the place of residence for great saintly ones. Both the wise and the saintly have considered the mountain to be their innermost place and to be their body and mind. And thanks to the wise and the saintly, mountains have manifested before our very eyes. People in general tend to regard mountains simply as gathering places for ever so many great saints and wise ones, but for those who enter a mountain, there will not be a single person whom any of them will meet; only the natural functioning of a mountain will manifest, and nothing more. And furthermore, no traces of their having entered will be left behind.

When someone with the perspective of the secular world encounters a mountain, and when someone with the perspective of one amongst mountains meets this mountain, how their minds think of this mountain or how their eyes see this mountain will be vastly different. The conventional human perception of 'something flowing' and the conventional human perception of 'something not flowing' will not be at all like the perceptions of dragons and fish. Ordinary people, as well as those in lofty positions, strive to secure a place within their own sphere; other species may look upon this with suspicion, or may even give rise to doubtful thoughts. Thus, you should investigate the phrase 'mountains flow' with the Ancestors of the Buddha, and do not abandon the matter when you find yourself surprised or in doubt. Taken in one context, they flow; taken in another, they do not flow. One time round, they flow; another time round, they do not flow. If you do

not investigate the matter in this way through your practice, it will not be the Tathagata's Wheel of the True Teaching.

❀

A former Buddha once said, "If you would avoid incurring unrelenting, hellish karma, do not malign the Tathagata's Wheel of the True Teaching." You should engrave these words on your skin, flesh, bones, and marrow; you should engrave them on the outer circumstances and inner conditions of your body and mind; you should engrave them on what is immaterial; you should engrave them on what is material. They have already been engraved on trees and on stones; they have already been engraved on both cultivated fields and places of human habitation.

Generally speaking, we say that mountains belong to some country or region, but it is to those who love mountains that they really belong. Invariably, when a mountain loves its Host, the lofty virtues of the saintly and wise enter the mountain. When those who are saintly and wise dwell in the mountains, the mountains belong to them; as a result, the trees grow luxuriant and boulders abound, the birds are wondrous and the animals are surpassing fine. This is because they are under the influence of the virtues of one who is saintly and wise. You need to recognize that the truth of the matter is that mountains are fond of those who are wise, and that they are fond of those who are saintly.

From the past to the present, it has been a good example for us that emperors have often gone up a mountain to bow to a wise one and to respectfully question a great saintly one. At such a time, they show their respect with all the formalities due their teacher: they do not follow the ordinary ways of behaving towards people. When an emperor extends his loving influence over his subjects, he never uses it to coerce mountain sages, for clearly, mountains are separate from the world of human society. In the legendary times of the Chinese Flower Kingdom, on the occasion when the Yellow Emperor paid a respectful visit to Kuang-cheng, who was the guardian spirit on Mount Kung-tung, he crawled on his hands and knees, groveling obsequiously and begging the spirit for instruction.

Also, once Shakyamuni Buddha had left the palace of His father the king, He entered the mountains. Even so, His royal father did not feel rancor towards the mountains. Nor did His royal father distrust those in the mountains who were teaching the prince. The twelve years that He trained in the Way were largely spent in the mountains. His realization as Lord of the Dharma also took place whilst in the mountains. Truly, even universal monarchs whose chariot wheels roll everywhere do not undertake to forcibly control the mountains.

To be sure, a mountain is not the realm of ordinary folk, nor is it the realm of those who dwell in lofty places. You cannot really perceive what a mountain is by means of the standards used by those who wander in ignorance. If mountains are beyond comparison with the everyday notion of 'flowing', who then, pray, can doubt that a mountain flows, and that a mountain does not flow, as well as whatever else a mountain may do?

And, from distant times, there have been wise ones and saintly ones who were even wont to live on the water. Whilst living on the water, some caught fish, some caught humans, and some caught the Way. These are all in the traditional mainstream of 'being in the Water'. Along with this, there will be those who catch themselves, those who catch the Hook, those who are caught by the Hook, and those who are caught by the Way. Long ago, no sooner had the monk Tokujō left his Transmission Master Yakusan to go live at the heart of the river than he became acquainted with the wise and saintly one of the Hua-tung River.[18] Was it not a fish he hooked? Was it not a person he hooked? Was it not the Water he hooked? Was it not someone from the Water he hooked? The one who can really 'see' Tokujō is Tokujō. Tokujō encountering of That One is his meeting 'the True Person'.

❀

Not only is there water in the world, there is a world within the world of water. Not only is it like this in water, there is also a sentient world in clouds, and a sentient world in wind, and a sentient world in fire, and a sentient world in earth, and a sentient world in the realm of thoughts and things, and a sentient world in a blade of grass, and a sentient world in a monk's traveling staff. Wherever there is a sentient world, there is, of necessity, a world of Buddhas and Ancestors in that place. Such a principle should be well explored indeed! Hence, the Water is the very palace of the True Dragon: It is beyond flowing or falling. If we recognize It only as something that flows, the word 'flowing' slanders the Water. One reason for this is that the use of the word forces It to be something not flowing. The Water is simply the Water as It is, in and of Itself. It is the natural functioning of the Water as the Water and is beyond 'flowing'. As soon as you penetrate through your practice both the flowing of a single drop of water and its non-flowing, the complete penetration of all thoughts and things will immediately manifest before your very eyes. With mountains, too, there are mountains hidden within treasures,

18. After Tokujō left his Master, he ferried a small boat across the river. He tried to teach Zen to those boarding his ferry boat. He often lifted his oar out of the water and said, "Do you understand?" One of those whom he met in this way later became his Dharma heir.

mountains hidden within marshes, mountains hidden within the sky, mountains hidden within mountains. And there is learning through practice that there are mountains which are hidden within That Which Is Hidden.

The Old Buddha Ummon Bun'en once said, "Mountains are mountains; water is water." What these words mean goes beyond saying that mountains are mountains: it is saying that Mountains are mountains. Therefore, you need to investigate Mountains through your practice. If you thoroughly investigate Mountains in your practice, this will be your effort in the mountains. In this way, the Mountains and the Water will naturally produce the wise as well as the saintly.

Given to the assembly at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the eighteenth day of the tenth lunar month in the first year of the Ninji era (November 3, 1240).

I made this copy in the chaplain's quarters at Kippō-ji Temple, Yoshida Province, Echizen Prefecture, on the third day of the sixth lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (July 9, 1244).

Ejō

14

On the Buddhas and the Ancestors

(Busso)

Translator's Introduction: In this short discourse, Dōgen presents the traditional Sōtō Zen Ancestral line up through Dōgen's Master, Tendō Nyojō. The Sanskrit forms for the names of the Indian Ancestors are, in a few cases, the translator's choice among several different possible reconstructions that have been offered by Asian and Western scholars.

With deepest respect.

The Buddhas and Ancestors manifest before our very eyes whenever we respectfully serve the Buddhas and Ancestors by bringing Them up through our presenting of Their story. They are not limited simply to some past, present, or future time, for They have undoubtedly gone beyond even 'going beyond Buddha'. Once we have taken up what we truly know of the reputation of a Buddha or an Ancestor, we bow in respect as we meet That One face-to-face. Having made evident the spiritual virtues of a Buddha or an Ancestor and held them aloft, we take our abode in them and uphold them, embodying them that we may realize the Truth in them.

The Seven Buddhas:

The Great Monk Bibashi Buddha, called herein 'the One Who Universally Proclaims the Dharma'

The Great Monk Shiki Buddha, called herein 'the Fire'

The Great Monk Bishafu Buddha, called herein 'the All Compassionate One'

The Great Monk Kuruson Buddha, called herein 'the Hermit of Gold'

The Great Monk Kunagonmuni Buddha, called herein 'the Golden Sage'

The Great Monk Kashō Buddha, called herein 'the All-absorbing Light'

The Great Monk Shakyamuni Buddha, called herein 'the Thoroughly Patient and Still One'

The Indian Ancestors:

1. The Great Monk Makakashō
2. The Great Monk Ananda
3. The Great Monk Shōnawashu
4. The Great Monk Ubakikuta
5. The Great Monk Daitaka
6. The Great Monk Mishaka
7. The Great Monk Bashumitsu
8. The Great Monk Butsudanandai
9. The Great Monk Fudamitta
10. The Great Monk Barishiba
11. The Great Monk Funayasha
12. The Great Monk Ashvaghoṣa
13. The Great Monk Kabimora
14. The Great Monk Nāgārjuna also called Lung-shu, Lung-sheng, or Lung-meng
15. The Great Monk Kanadaiba
16. The Great Monk Ragorata
17. The Great Monk Sōgyanandai
18. The Great Monk Kayashata
19. The Great Monk Kumorata
20. The Great Monk Shayata
21. The Great Monk Vasubandhu
22. The Great Monk Manura
23. The Great Monk Kakurokuna
24. The Great Monk Shishibodai
25. The Great Monk Bashashita
26. The Great Monk Funyomitta
27. The Great Monk Hannyatara
28. The Great Monk Bodhidharma

(The Chinese Ancestors:)

The Great Monk Eka
The Great Monk Kanchi Sōsan
The Great Monk Daii Dōshin
The Great Monk Daiman Kōnin
The Great Monk Daikan Enō
The Great Monk Seigen Gyōshi

The Great Monk Sekitō Kisen
The Great Monk Yakusan Igen
The Great Monk Ungan Donjō
The Great Monk Tōzan Ryōkai
The Great Monk Ungo Dōyō
The Great Monk Dōan Dōhi
The Great Monk Dōan Kanshi
The Great Monk Ryōzan Enkan
The Great Monk Daiyō Kyōgen
The Great Monk Tōsu Gisei
The Great Monk Fuyō Dōkai
The Great Monk Tanka Shijun
The Great Monk Chōro Seiryō
The Great Monk Tendō Sōkaku
The Great Monk Setchō Chikan
The Great Monk Tendō Nyojō of the twenty-third generation in China

During the summer retreat in the first year of the Chinese Pao-ch'ing era (1225) in Great Sung China, whilst I, Dōgen, was training and serving under my late Master, the venerable Buddha, Great Monk Tendō Nyojō, I came to know, through and through, the significance of making a full venerative bow to these Buddhas and Ancestors and of receiving Them upon my head. It was what each Buddha realized on His own, just as all Buddhas have done.

Delivered to the assembly from a manuscript on the third day of the first month in the second year of the Ninji era (February 15, 1241) at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple, Uji Province, Yamashiro Prefecture, Japan.

I copied this whilst in the chaplain's quarters at Kippō-ji Temple, Echizen Province, on the fourteenth day of the fifth month of the second year of the Kangen era (May 20, 1244).

Ejō

15

On the Record of Transmission

(Shisho)

Translator's Introduction: In this text which he wrote for his monks, Dōgen takes up the topic of the *shisho*, the name of a Buddhist document which may literally be translated as 'the record of the inheritors'. This record is usually written on silk, and it consists of a listing of the names of those in the Ancestral line from Shakyamuni Buddha up to the person receiving the record, all of whom are considered to be inheritors of the Dharma. In a narrow sense, this physical record pertains to the certification connected with formal Transmission. In the latter part of this text, Dōgen describes various Transmission Silks that he saw during his sojourn in China.

The Record of Transmission, however, has a deeper significance, one that goes beyond a conventional historical approach to the topic of ancestral succession. This spiritual significance, as Dōgen tells us at the end of this work, was taught to him by his Master Tendō Nyojō, and it colors his whole discussion: namely, that the inheritance of the Dharma flows not only from Master to disciple but also from disciple to Master. This implies, among other things, that fundamentally there is no separate self that receives the Transmission, nor any other that gives It.

In various other discourses, Dōgen's references to the Dharma that is inherited may have been intended to encompass the whole body of what the Buddha taught, while in this text the references could be intended to point in particular to the Precepts, since the receiving of the Precepts in the Sōtō tradition is an inheritance of Dharma common to lay ordination, monastic ordination, and formal Transmission.

I, Dōgen, a mendicant monk of the fifty-first generation, now at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple, who went to Sung China in order to receive and then Transmit the Dharma, have respectfully written down this document for those descendants in our lineage who desire that their attesting to the Truth be certified by means of the Record of Transmission of the Dharma that Buddhas inherit from Buddhas, and Ancestors inherit from Ancestors.[1]

Beyond doubt, Buddha after Buddha has inherited the Dharma from Buddha after Buddha and, beyond doubt, Ancestor after Ancestor has inherited the Dharma from Ancestor after Ancestor. This is Their direct experiencing of what has been promised.[2] It is the simple, direct, one-to-one Transmission and, because of this, it

1. This opening statement prefaces the original text.

2. This phrase translates Dōgen's highly truncated technical term for the direct experiencing of the fulfillment of Shakyamuni Buddha's promise that all sentient beings, without exception, will—as He did—ultimately become Buddha.

is the unsurpassed state of enlightenment. If one is not a Buddha, one cannot give the seal of certification* to a Buddha, and no one ever becomes a Buddha without receiving a Buddha's seal of certification. Who other than a Buddha could declare this state to be the most honored or certify it to be unsurpassed?

When we receive the Buddha's seal of certification, it is because we have spontaneously awakened, independent of a Master, and because we have spontaneously awakened, independent of a self. This is why it is said that Buddha after Buddha has inherited the certification and Ancestor after Ancestor has experienced what was promised. The fundamental meaning of this principle cannot be clearly resolved except between Buddha and Buddha. How could it possibly be like what is surmised by those at any of the various stages along the Bodhisattva* Path, to say nothing of what doctrinal teachers or mundane commentators on Scriptural texts reckon it to be! In whatever way we may try to explain it to others, they cannot really hear what is being said, because it is something that Buddhas inherit from Buddhas.

The Buddha's Way has been thoroughly mastered solely by Buddha after Buddha, and there has never been a time when there was not a succession of Buddha after Buddha. By way of analogy, there is the situation of 'stones successively inheriting from stones' and of 'jewels successively inheriting from jewels'.[3] The succession of Ancestors resembles 'the mutual inheriting by chrysanthemums' and 'the giving of the seal of certification by pines': in both cases, there is not the slightest gap between the previous chrysanthemums and the ones that follow, nor is there any gap between the previous pines and the ones that follow.[4] Those folks who are unclear about such things may indeed encounter the words and ways which Buddha after Buddha has correctly passed on, yet they do not have the slightest clue as to what they have heard, for they have never grasped the meaning of the phrase "Ancestor after Ancestor has experienced what was

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* See *Glossary*.

3. The term 'stones' is often used to describe the dull, hard minds of those who have not yet awakened to Truth, whereas 'jewels' would be descriptive of the bright, clear minds of those who have awakened. In the present context, this would imply that what Buddha after Buddha has inherited is not the same as what people in ordinary, everyday society culturally inherit.

4. From context, it is likely that 'the mutual inheriting by chrysanthemums' refers to the horizontal relationship of Master and disciple, wherein both are equal in their Buddha Nature. 'The giving of the seal of certification by pines' refers to the vertical relationship of senior Master and junior disciple. The Master-disciple relationship contains both of these aspects at the same time.

promised, which is what Buddha after Buddha has been heir to." Sad to say, even though such people may bear a superficial resemblance to the progeny of Buddhas, they are not disciples of the Buddha, nor are they Buddhas who have disciples.

❀

The Sixth Chinese Ancestor, while dwelling on Mount Sōkei, once pointed out to his assembly, "From the Seven Buddhas* to me, Enō, there have been forty generations of Buddhas, and from me, Enō, to the Seven Buddhas, there have been forty generations of Ancestors." This principle is clearly the correct doctrine of the succession of Buddhas and Ancestors. Among the Seven Buddhas, there are Those who manifested in the past Eon of the Sublime, and there are Those who manifested in the present Eon of the Wise and Virtuous.[5] In addition to this, that which links the Face-to-Face Transmission of the Forty Ancestors is the path of the Buddhas, the succession of Buddhas.

Thus, when we proceed from the Sixth Chinese Ancestor to the Seven Buddhas, there is the succession of forty Ancestors. In proceeding from the Seven Buddhas to the Sixth Ancestor, there is the succession of forty Buddhas. Both the path of Buddhas and the path of Ancestors are just like this. If we do not experience what was promised, if we are not an Ancestor of the Buddha, then we will lack the spiritually wise discernment of a Buddha, and we will lack an Ancestor's full realization of the True Nature of things. A Buddha lacking spiritually wise discernment would be a Buddha devoid of faith: an Ancestor without full realization of the True Nature of things would be an Ancestor lacking the experience of what was promised. The forty Ancestors whom I have referred to here are just the Ones who are in our specific lineage.

In accord with what I have been saying, the process of succession of Buddha after Buddha is something that is extraordinarily profound. It is completely resolute, neither retreating nor deviating: it is unbroken in its continuity and has never died out. The fundamental point of this process is that, even though Shakyamuni Buddha had realized the Truth prior to the age of the Seven Buddhas, it was a long time before He inherited the Dharma from Kashō Buddha. Although it is said that He realized the Truth on the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month, thirty years after His birth, this was His realizing the Truth prior to all the various Buddhas, and it was His realizing the Truth shoulder-to-shoulder and

5. The first three of these Buddhas (Bibashi, Shiki, and Bishafu) are said to have appeared in what is called the Eon of the Sublime, which precedes our own; the remaining four Buddhas (Kuruson, Kunagonmuni, Kashō, and Shakyamuni) are said to have appeared in our own eon, described as the Eon of the Wise and Virtuous.

simultaneously with the various Buddhas; it was His realizing the Truth both prior to and subsequent to all the various Buddhas.

Further, there is a principle that needs your meditative investigation: Kashō Buddha inherited the Dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha. Should you not know this principle, you will not clarify what the Buddha's Truth is, and if you do not clarify what the Buddha's Truth is, you will not be an heir of the Buddha. 'An heir of the Buddha' is the same as 'a disciple of the Buddha'.

Shakyamuni once inspired Ananda to ask, "Pray, whose disciples are the various Buddhas of the past?" Shakyamuni Buddha responded, "The various Buddhas of the past are My disciples." All the various Buddhas behave in a similar Buddhist way. To respectfully serve these various Buddhas, to inherit the Buddha Dharma, and to bring this inheritance to fruition, this surely is the Way of the Buddhas for Buddha after Buddha. And, without fail, when someone inherits the Dharma of this Way of Buddhas, there will invariably be a record of inheritance.[6]

Anyone who has not inherited the Dharma will be a person outside the Buddhist Way, one who has not recognized what karmic* cause and effect are, but thinks that things are the way they are because of their inherent nature. If the Way of the Buddhas had not determined the succession of the Dharma, how could It possibly have come down to us today? For this reason, with Buddha after Buddha, there has been, beyond doubt, the passing on of a record of Buddha Transmitting Buddha, and there has been the acquiring of that record of Buddha Transmitting Buddha. The nature of that record of Transmission is, for one person, the inheriting of the Dharma by clarifying 'sun, moon, and stars', and, for another, the inheriting of the Dharma by obtaining Its Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow. Or it is the passing on of a kesa,* or the passing on of a traveling staff, or the passing on of a pine branch, or the passing on of a ceremonial hossu,* or the passing on of an udumbara blossom, or the passing on of a gold brocade robe. There has also been the passing on of a straw sandal and the passing on of a stick of bamboo.

When these inheritances of the Dharma are passed on, the recipient may record the succession with blood taken from a finger or from the tongue. And the record may also be written with oil or milk. These are all records of Transmission. The one who passes It on and the one who receives It are both, indeed, heirs of the Buddha. When they fully manifest as Ancestors of the Buddha, their inheriting of the Dharma will undoubtedly fully manifest as well. When It manifested, It came even though they did not expect It, and many are the Ancestors of the Buddha who

6. This would include not only those monks who had been Transmitted, but also all ordained monks and those of the laity who had committed themselves to the Buddhist Way by doing Jukai, the Ceremony of Receiving the Precepts.

inherited the Dharma even though they did not deliberately seek It. Those who have inherited the Dharma are, beyond any doubt, Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor.

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Ever since our Twenty-eighth Ancestor Bodhidharma came from the West, we in eastern lands have correctly heard the fundamental point that within the Buddha's Way there is an inheriting of the Dharma. Before then, this had not been heard of here in the eastern lands. It was something not yet realized or even known about by scriptural scholars and teachers of the *Tripitaka** in India, as well as being beyond the realm of those who are 'thrice wise and ten times saintly'.* Nor was its existence even suspected by those would-be teachers of mantric techniques, among others, who go searching for them through the *Tripitaka*. How sad that they have received a human body—which is a vessel of the Truth—and, at the same time, have vainly become enmeshed in the web of academic theories, ignorant of the method for attaining liberation and devoid of any expectation of a time when they might spring free. This is why we should, indeed, continually explore the Way through our training and should, indeed, wholeheartedly keep to the spirit of training.

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When I was in Sung China, I was able to bow in reverence to various records of Transmission, for there were many styles of Transmission records. Among them was that of Iitsu, who was a retired Master living in the West Hall at Keitoku-ji Temple,[7] where he had finally hung up his traveling staff. He was a man from the Yüeh District and the former Abbot of Kōfuku-ji Temple. He was from the same village as my late teacher. My late teacher was always saying, "You should go ask Iitsu in the West Hall about the customs of our region." One day, Iitsu said to me, "Being able to look at ancient pieces of calligraphy is something that we humans prize very highly. How many have you already seen?" I replied, "I've just seen a few." Then he said, "I have an old scroll of calligraphy somewhere among my belongings. It's not much of a thing. But I'll let you have a look at it, venerable brother." When I looked at what he brought out, it was a Transmission record that had belonged to a ninth-century disciple of Hōgen. It had been obtained from among the robes and alms bowl of some elderly master upon his decease. It was not Iitsu's Transmission record. On it was written, "The First Ancestor Makakashō awoke to the Truth under Shakyamuni Buddha, and Shakyamuni

7. The Abbot of Keitoku-ji Temple during this time was Tendō Nyojō, Dōgen's Master.

Buddha awoke to the Truth under Kashō Buddha." That was the way it was put. Having seen these words, I, Dōgen, was convinced that there is a Dharma Transmission from a true heir to a true heir. It was Dharma that I had never seen before. This was an occasion when the Buddhas and the Ancestors, unseen, responded to the needs of one of Their offspring. My feelings of gratitude could not match the moment.

The Venerable Master Shūgetsu, while a senior monk at Keitoku-ji Temple, also showed me a Transmission record, one that he said belonged to Ummon's lineage. The name of the Master just preceding the person who was receiving the Transmission record, along with those of the Indian and Chinese Ancestors of the Buddha, were arranged in columns, below which was the name of the person receiving the Transmission record. It made a link from all the Buddhas and Ancestors directly to the name of the new Ancestor. Thus, the names from the Tathagata through some forty generations all came down to the name of the new heir. It was as if he were being certified by each new Ancestor in turn. Some names, however, such as Makakashō and Ananda, were lined up as if they belonged to branches other than his. I then asked Senior Monk Shūgetsu, "Venerable monk, when we list the lineages of the five Zen families today, there are a few differences from this. What is at the heart of this? If there has been a succession of heirs from India one after the other, how can there be any differences?" Shūgetsu replied, "Even if the differences were far greater, still, we should simply pass on that the Buddhas of Mount Ummon are like this. Why is our Venerable Master Shakyamuni revered so deeply by others? He is deeply revered because He awoke to the Truth. Why is Great Master Ummon revered so deeply by others? He is deeply revered because he awoke to the Truth." When I heard these words, I had a bit more understanding.

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Nowadays in the provinces of Kiangsu and Chekiang, the heads of the large temples, by and large, are Dharma heirs of Rinzai, Ummon, or Tōzan. However, a bunch of fellows who proclaim themselves to be distantly related to Rinzai are up to something that is just not right. They join the assembly of some prominent Master, purportedly to train, and then earnestly beg him for a hanging portrait or a scroll inscribed with some Dharma saying, which they then store up for future use as proof of their being this Master's Dharma heir. As if this were not enough, there are among such types those 'dogs' who, having earnestly requested, say, a Dharma inscription or a portrait from some venerable monk, hoard such objects until their store of them is quite large. Then, when they reach their later years, they bribe some official to get themselves a temple. At the time when they are appointed its

chief monk, they are not Dharma heirs of the Master who gave them the Dharma inscription or the portrait. When they do inherit the Dharma, either from their contemporary monks who have become celebrities or from senior monks who have intimate connections with rulers and their ministers, they are not asking for the Dharma, but are only greedy for fame and reputation. What a pity that such wicked customs exist in these evil times when the Dharma is coming to an end! Among people like these, not even one has ever seen or heard of the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors, even in his dreams.

Customarily, as to a Master's granting a monk something like a copy of a Dharma saying or a portrait, such things are also given to scholastic lecturers belonging to various branches of Buddhism and to householders, male and female. They are also granted to lay temple workers, tradesmen, and the like. The truth of this is clear from the records of the various branches. On the other hand, even those who are not sincere followers may implore a Master for a scroll of calligraphy because they crave evidence of their being a Dharma heir and, even though it is a situation that the Master, as one who has realized the Truth, deplores, he reluctantly takes brush in hand. In such a situation, he does not use the traditional way of expressing the matter, but signs it with some phrase like 'your Master is me'. In recent times, the procedure is simply for some monk to inherit the Dharma as a Master as soon as he attains any degree of proficiency in his Master's assembly. And many indeed are the fellows who have never received their Master's seal, but who simply pay perfunctory visits to the Master's quarters, enter the Lecture Hall, and occupy a place in the Meditation Hall. Even though the Master is residing in the temple, they do not make the time to receive his personal instruction, yet they claim that Master to be their Master, should they happen to break open the Great Matter.[8]

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There was a monk known as Chief Librarian Den, who was a remote descendant of the Rinzai Meditation Master Butsugen, this Master also being known by the name of Seien of Ryūmon Temple. Chief Librarian Den also carried a Transmission record with him. Near the beginning of the Chinese Chia-ting Era, when he became ill, he was nursed by a Japanese senior monk named Ryūzen. After his recovery, to show his appreciation for Ryūzen's considerate care, he took

8. That is, such persons may have had a genuine realization of the Truth, but they have not truly trained with the Master, to say nothing of having gone to the Master in order to have their understanding certified.

out the Transmission record and let Ryūzen bow to it, saying, "This is something rare to see. I offer it to you that you may pay your respects to it."

Eight years later, in the autumn of the sixteenth year of the same era (1223), during my first sojourn on Mount Tendō, Senior Monk Ryūzen asked Den to show me his Transmission record. This Transmission record was such that the names of forty-five Ancestors, from the Seven Buddhas down to Rinzai, were written out in columns, while the names of the Masters following Rinzai formed a circle in which their inscribed Dharma names were sealed with their monograms. The name of the new heir was written at the end of the record, below the date. We need to recognize that the form of this record in no way differs from that of Rinzai's other venerable disciples.

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My late Master, the Abbot of Keitoku-ji Temple, strongly cautioned his assembly about speaking in an imprudent way about someone's inheriting the Dharma. Truly, my late Master's assembly was a veritable 'assembly of the ancient Buddha', a restoration of the Buddha's 'monastic forest'. My late Master did not personally wear multi-colored kesas. Although the variegated, patchwork kesa of Meditation Master Dōkai of Mount Fuyō had been passed on to him, he did not use it, even when he sat in the teacher's seat in the Lecture Hall. In short, he never wore a brocaded Dharma robe in his whole life as Abbot. Everyone, both the thoughtful and the naive, praised him for this and esteemed him as a true spiritual friend.

When my late Master entered the Lecture Hall, he would admonish all those about him, saying, "Recently, a bunch who style themselves as ones who follow the Way of our Ancestor Bodhidharma irresponsibly go about wearing a Dharma robe along with their long hair and signing their name with the title of Master as their way of navigating themselves to prominence. How pitiful! Who will rescue them? I regret to say that there are senior monks, far and wide, who have no heart for the Way and so they do not investigate It or train in It. Even rarer—not one in a hundred thousand—are those who have seen or heard of the relationship between the Transmission record and inheriting the Dharma. This is indeed the decline of the Way of our Ancestor Bodhidharma!" He was constantly admonishing us in this way, but none of the senior monks ever took offence. Therefore, if trainees do their utmost to practice the Way with a sincere heart, they <u>will</u> see and hear that there is a Transmission record. This seeing and hearing will be part of their exploring the Way through their training.

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In a Rinzai Transmission record, the name of the Master is written first, and then the name of the disciple who came to train with him, followed by the phrase 'entered my assembly, entered my training hall, and was made my heir', followed by the list of names of those Ancestors of the previous generations. This record also contains a bit of instruction on the Dharma which the Master has expressed in his own words. The basic import of this record is simply that an heir has encountered a genuine 'good spiritual friend': this is the truly fundamental point. There is no need to be concerned with whether these names come at the end or the beginning of the record. I saw one from the Rinzai tradition that was written in this manner. I put it down here just as I actually saw it:[9]

> Chief Librarian Ryōha was a person of authority and military valor. He is now my disciple.
>
> I, Tokkō, trained under and served Abbot Daie Sōkō of Mount Kinzan,
>
> Kinzan was an heir to Engo Kokugon of Mount Kassan,
> Engo was an heir to Goso Hōen of Mount Yōgi,
> Hōen was an heir to Kaie Shutan of Mount Hakuun,
> Shutan was an heir to Hōe of Mount Yōgi,
> Hōe was an heir to Jimyō Soen,
> Soen was an heir to Fun'yō Zenshō,
> Zenshō was an heir to Shōnen of Mount Shuzan,
> Shōnen was an heir to Enshō of Mount Fuketsu,
> Enshō was an heir to Nan'in Egyō,
> Egyō was an heir to Sonshō of Kōke Temple,
> Sonshō was an heir to the Great Founding Ancestor Rinzai.

Meditation Master Busshō Tokkō wrote this whilst on Mount Ashoka and gave it to Musai Ryōha. When the latter became Abbot of Keitoku-ji Temple,[10] his junior disciple Chikō brought it out and showed it to me in private in the Dormitory of Clarity. I first saw it on the twenty-first day of the first lunar month in the seventeenth year in the Chia-ting Era of Great Sung China (February 11, 1224). My joy was immeasurable! My seeing it was surely due to unseen help from

9. The original text gives some Chinese names in abbreviated form; the translation has supplied fuller, Japanese forms for them.

10. When Musai Ryōha was approaching death, he invited Nyojō to become the next Abbot of Keitoku-ji Temple on Mount Tendō. Nyojō accepted and became known as Tendō Nyojō.

the Buddhas and Ancestors. After offering incense and respectfully bowing, I opened it and read it.

My desire to be shown this Transmission record arose around the seventh lunar month of the previous year, when the temple comptroller Shikō told me about it in private while we were in the Hall of Serene Light. I asked the comptroller in passing, "In whose care is it at present?" The comptroller answered, "Apparently, it is in the venerable Abbot's quarters. Later, if you were to ask him in a cordial way to show it to you, I am sure he would do so." After I heard these words, my intention to make a request for it did not let up day or night. So, in the following year, and with some trepidation, I put my request to the Abbot's junior disciple Chikō in a friendly way, placing my whole heart in it, and my request was indeed granted.

The wrapper to which it was attached was covered with white silk on the inside and with red brocade on the outside. Its spindle was of jade. It was a scroll about nine inches high and over seven feet wide. As it was not something shown to the idle or the curious, I duly offered my thanks to Chikō, and forthwith went to the Abbot, made an incense offering, respectfully bowed, and gave my thanks to the Venerable Musai. Musai then said to me, "Those who get a chance to see and know this particular object are very few. You, my venerable elder brother, have now come to know it. This is the real refuge for exploring the Way through your training, and just so!" Nothing had ever surpassed the joy that I felt then.

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Later, around the time of the Chinese Pao-ching Era (1225-1227), when I was drifting like a cloud from monastery to monastery on such mountains as Tendai and Gantō, I came to Mannen Temple in the P'ing-t'ien region. The Abbot at the time was the Venerable Genshi of Fukushū. Upon the retirement of Abbot Shūkan, the Venerable Genshi had been appointed to the post, and he was strongly encouraging the practice of seated meditation in the temple. Following the customary salutations, we took up the topic of the various customs and traditions of the Ancestors of the Buddha down through the ages. While I was proffering the story about Isan Reiyū asking Kyōzan about the quality of the latter's recent heirs, the Abbot asked, "Have you ever seen the Transmission record that I have here?" I replied, "How could I have seen it?" The Abbot then stood up and, holding up his Transmission record, he said, "Even if someone were a close friend, even if he were someone who had spent years as my attendant monk, I would not permit him to see this. This is, of course, the Dharma instruction of the Buddhas and the Ancestors. But, be that as it may," Genshi said, "once when I was on my customary trip to the city with the intention of visiting the governor, I experienced a vision. In

it, there was a distinguished monk who looked like Meditation Master Daibai Hōjō. Holding aloft a branch of plum blossoms, he said, 'If you should meet a Real Person who has already crossed over by ferry, do not begrudge him these flowers,' and then he handed me the plum blossoms. In response, I spontaneously chanted, 'Before he even entered the boat, he deserved thirty blows.' Not five days had passed, when I met you face-to-face, my venerable elder brother, and what is more, you have come by boat. And, in addition, this Transmission record of mine is written on damask that has a plum blossom pattern woven into it. Since you correspond to the one mentioned in the vision, you must be the one whom Daibai was instructing me about. Venerable elder brother, do you wish to be my Dharma heir? If you do, I would be delighted to Transmit you."

In no way could I ignore his feeling of trust. Although I could have received the Transmission, instead I simply lit incense, reverently bowed to the record, and gave the Abbot my deepest respect and veneration as an offering. At the time, there was an incense monk in attendance, one named Hōnei, who said that it was the first time that he had ever seen a Transmission record.

I thought to myself, "Truly, were it not for the unseen help of the Buddhas and Ancestors, it would have been nigh on impossible for me to have seen or even heard about this sort of thing. What good fortune that I, a foolish and ignorant fellow from a remote country, have seen so many of them," and tears of gratitude wet my sleeves. At that time, the Vimalakirti* Room for lay guests and the Chief Monk's Hall, among others, were quiet and unoccupied. This Transmission record was written on white silk with a plum blossom pattern. It was over nine inches high and more than six feet wide. Its spindle was of topaz and its outer cover was of silk.

On my way back from Mount Tendai to Mount Tendō, I was staying the night in the hall for traveling monks at Goshō-ji Temple on Mount Daibai, where I experienced a wondrous vision in which Ancestral Master Daibai came and offered me a branch of plum flowers in full bloom. The vision of an Ancestor is the most reliable thing there is. The blossoms on the branch were more than a foot in diameter. The plum blossom must surely be an udumbara flower![11] What is seen in a vision and what is seen in a waking state will be equally real. While I was in

11. The plum tree blooms in late winter and, as the first plant to blossom, is traditionally considered in the Far East as the harbinger of spring. In Buddhist texts, it is often associated with Shakyamuni Buddha. The udumbara tree is said to blossom only once every three thousand years. Its flower is often used in Buddhist writings as an illustration of how difficult it is to encounter the Dharma. Both types of blossoms are frequently used as symbols for the Transmission of the Dharma.

Sung China and since my return to this country, I have not told this to anyone before.

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At the present time, the writing of a Transmission record in our Tōzan lineage is different from that in others, such as the Rinzai lineage. Our monastery's Founding Ancestor Seigen, in front of the desk of his Master Daikan Enō, wrote out with blood that flowed from his finger that which had been kept under the robe of the Buddha's Ancestor Enō. Tradition has it that the passing on of the record was done by Seigen mixing the blood from his finger with that of Enō. Tradition also has it that the ceremony of mixing blood also occurred in the case of our First Ancestor Bodhidharma and our Second Ancestor Eka. To refrain from writing such things as "My disciple So-and-so" or "So-and-so came to train with me" is the rule for Transmission records which various Buddhas, including the Seven Buddhas, have written and passed on.

So, keep in mind that Enō graciously blended his blood and spirit with Seigen's immaculate blood, and Seigen's immaculate blood personally blended with the parental blood of Enō. Thus, our distinguished Ancestor, Venerable Seigen, and he alone, was the only one to so intimately receive Enō's direct certification; it is not something that his other disciples attained. Folks who know about these matters are wont to say that Enō Transmitted the Buddha Dharma directly to Seigen, and to Seigen alone.

❀

The Record of Transmission

My late teacher, an Old Buddha, the Great Master and Abbot of Keitoku-ji Temple, once said to me, "All the Buddhas have, beyond doubt, inherited the Dharma. That is to say, Shakyamuni Buddha inherited the Dharma from Kashō Buddha. Kashō Buddha inherited the Dharma from Kunagonmuni Buddha. Kunagonmuni Buddha inherited the Dharma from Kuruson Buddha. You must have faith that Buddha after Buddha has inherited It in this manner, reaching down to us now, for this is how we explore the Way of the Buddhas through our training."

I then said to him, "It was after Kashō Buddha had entered nirvana that Shakyamuni Buddha first emerged into the world and realized the Truth. Moreover, how could the Buddhas of the present Eon of the Wise and Virtuous have inherited the Dharma from the Buddhas in the previous Eon of the Sublime? What do you think?"

My late teacher responded, "What you have said is an interpretation based on your listening to scholarly theories. It is an expression of those who are thrice wise and ten times saintly. It is not something that those in the succession of legitimate heirs of the Buddhas and Ancestors say. Our way of Transmission from Buddha to Buddha is not like that. We have learned that Shakyamuni Buddha, beyond any doubt whatsoever, inherited the Dharma from Kashō Buddha. Through our spiritual exploring, we learn that after Shakyamuni Buddha inherited the Dharma, Kashō Buddha entered nirvana. If Shakyamuni Buddha had not inherited the Dharma from Kashō Buddha, He would have been the same as some non-Buddhist who denies cause and effect, so who then could have faith in Shakyamuni Buddha? Because the inheritance passes from Buddha to Buddha in this manner and has come down to us today, all the Buddhas, individually, are genuine heirs. It is not that They are lined up, one after the other, nor is it that They are gathered together in a mass. We just learn that the inheritance passes from Buddha to Buddha in this manner. Do not get all embroiled with the measurements of eons or the measurements of lifespans as spoken of literally in the various *Āgama Scriptures*. If we say that the succession started just with Shakyamuni Buddha, that would merely be some two thousand or so years ago, which is not all that old. The Transmission would barely cover some forty generations. It could be said to be relatively new. The succession of Buddhas is not to be investigated in this manner. We learn that Shakyamuni Buddha inherited the Dharma from Kashō Buddha, and we learn that Kashō Buddha inherited the Dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha. When we learn the matter in this way, it will be the true succession of Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor."

Then, for the first time, not only did I receive this serving of his spiritually nourishing rice, namely, that we have the Transmission of the Dharma from the Buddhas and Ancestors, but I also let go of some old cobwebs from my past.

Written on the twenty-seventh day of the third lunar month in the second year of the Japanese Ninji era (April 9, 1241) at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple by me, the mendicant monk Dōgen, who went into Sung China in order to receive and then Transmit the Dharma.

Copied by me on the twenty-fifth day of the second lunar month in the fourth year of the Ninji era (March 17, 1243).

Ejō,
Abbot's Assistant

16

On 'The Flowering of the Dharma Sets the Dharma's Flowering in Motion'

(Hokke Ten Hokke)

Translator's Introduction: According to Dōgen's postscript to this discourse, he originally prepared it for a monk named Edatsu whom he had ordained. Edatsu's decision to become a monk was apparently deeply influenced by his encounter with the *Lotus Scripture*, for the discourse is heavily laden with allusions to and quotations from that work. Indeed, most of the descriptive terms and phrases Dōgen employs are taken from Kumārajīva's well-known Chinese version of this Scripture, and someone familiar with that translation would quite likely recognize the various contexts from which these terms and phrases were borrowed. Some of these have been identified in this translation by the addition of some phrase, such as 'which the *Lotus Scripture* calls'.

The title of Dōgen's discourse does not derive directly from the *Lotus Scripture*, but is based on terms used by the Sixth Chinese Ancestor Enō in a kōan story that Dōgen recounts. These terms carry multiple meanings which often apply simultaneously throughout the discourse, so that no single English rendering can fully encompass what the Sino-Japanese text is conveying, though all the meanings are pointing to the general topic of the consequences from expressing the Dharma.

To begin with, *hokke* can equally be rendered as 'the Flower of the Dharma' and 'the flowering of the Dharma', the latter in the sense of 'the appearing or emerging of the Dharma' as well as of 'giving expression to the Dharma'. It is also an allusion to *Hokke Kyō,* the abbreviated Sino-Japanese title for the *Lotus Scripture. Ten* primarily signifies such actions as 'turning', 'revolving', 'setting in motion', 'arousing', and 'giving rise to'. These two terms are combined into the two phrases *hokke ten* and *ten hokke*, which, according to Dōgen, are of Enō's coining. *Hokke ten* can be rendered by such phrases as 'being set in motion by the flowering of the Dharma', and 'being turned by the Flower of the Dharma' (that is, by the *Lotus Scripture* itself and the Dharma that is expressed in it). *Ten hokke* can be rendered in various ways, such as 'setting in motion a flowering of the Dharma', 'revolving (that is, perusing) the *Lotus Scripture*', and 'turning the Flower of the Dharma', this last being an alternate way of saying 'turning the Wheel of the Dharma'. All of these meanings are implicit within whichever term is used in the present translation. Hence, the title might also be rendered as "The *Lotus Scripture* Sets in Motion the Dharma's Flowering".

This discourse may prove to be one of the more difficult discourses in the *Shōbōgenzō.* It would be worth the reader's while to go through the work slowly several times to catch the beauty of the underlying Teaching.

Expounded for a certain person from Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple.

What exists everywhere within all Buddhist lands is simply the flowering of the Dharma. Everywhere and at all times, all Buddhas—along with Their assemblies of those who would realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment—experience the setting in motion of the flowering of the Dharma and They experience being moved by that flowering. This state is equivalent to what the *Lotus Scripture* describes by such phrases as 'the Bodhisattva* Way as practiced from the very first, without retreating or deviating', 'the profundity and breadth of the wise discernment of all Buddhas, which is beyond measure', as well as 'the clear and calm samadhi* that is difficult to comprehend and difficult to enter'.

Just as with Manjushri* Buddha in the *Lotus Scripture*, this state has the aspect of 'being just what one is', which is a characteristic of each individual Buddha, just as it is of all the other Buddhas, all of Whom take the Great Ocean as their Buddha Land.

On the other hand, Shakyamuni Buddha emerged in the world with His realizing that, as He put it, "Only I recognize the genuine character of things, as do all Buddhas everywhere." This is equivalent to the time when He said, "Having fully awakened to the One Great Matter,* I alone desire to help sentient beings open up to It, manifest It, awaken to It, and enter It, just as all Buddhas have done."

And these phrases from the *Lotus Scripture* also refer to Samantabhadra,* for He has succeeded in helping the Dharma's flowering to arise in others in ways that are beyond the intellective mind's ability to grasp or fathom. Also, He has succeeded in causing the profound, vast, and far-reaching supreme, fully perfected enlightenment to flow throughout Jambudvipa.* In that He has done this, the earth is able to produce the three kinds of grasses and the two kinds of trees, large and small, and the rain is able to moisten them all.[1] He alone accomplishes the exhaustive practice of helping the Dharma's flowering to arise in others in ways that are beyond our ability to know. Samantabhadra's proclaiming of the Dharma had not yet reached an end when the great assembly gathered on the Divine Vulture Peak to hear the Buddha give voice to the Dharma. The Venerable Shakyamuni

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* See *Glossary*.

1. This is a reference to "The Parable of the Herbs" in the *Lotus Scripture*, where ordinary, conventional human beings are likened to small grasses, the shravakas and pratyekabuddhas who follow the Lesser Course to various shrubbery, and the bodhisattvas who follow the Greater Course to three types of vegetation: tall grasses (such as bamboo), small trees, and large trees. In the parable, the rain is likened to the rain of Dharma which the Buddha showers down upon them so that they may all come to their spiritual fruition.

gave proof of Samantabhadra's comings and goings throughout the universe by means of the radiance emanating from the white hairs between His eyebrows.[2]

Shakyamuni's meeting with those in His assembly had not yet reached its midpoint when they experienced a flowering of the Dharma, which was set in motion by Manjushri's affirmation that Maitreya* would imminently realize Buddhahood. When they experienced this flowering of the Dharma, which was good through and through—beginning, middle, and end—Samantabhadra, the various Buddhas, Manjushri, and all the great assembly must surely have been carried to the Other Shore. This is why the flowering of the Dharma has manifested in the world as the fulfillment of the One Great Matter for which we train by relying on the One Vehicle.

Because this manifestation is the One Great Matter, each Buddha, on His own, fully realizes the aspect of Truth within all thoughts and things, just as all other Buddhas have done. This Teaching is, beyond doubt, what the *Lotus Scripture* calls 'the One Vehicle to Buddhahood, which Buddhas alone confirm and which They help all future Buddhas to fully realize'. The various Buddhas, including the Seven Buddhas,* have each helped Buddha after Buddha to fully realize the Truth, just as They helped Shakyamuni Buddha to fulfill His mission.

The lands from India in the west to China in the east are among the Buddhist lands throughout the ten directions. What has been fully realized in these lands, even up through the Thirty-third Ancestor, Meditation Master Daikan Enō, is the One Vehicle which was taught by each and every Buddha. It is the One Vehicle of all Buddhas. Our reliance solely upon It is, without doubt, the One Great Matter. It manifests in the world now: It manifests right here. Seigen's Buddhist modes of deportment have been handed down to us today and Nangaku's gates to the Dharma are still open in the world, all due to the Tathagata's knowing and seeing the True Nature of the world.[3] Surely, we are being aroused by the flowering of the Dharma when we say that this is what each Buddha on His own, together with all other Buddhas, have truly realized in full. It is what Those who succeeded Shakyamuni Buddha and what the Buddhas who have been Their successors have all opened up to, manifested, awakened to, and entered.

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2. That is, there was a radiance that seemed to pour forth from Shakyamuni's brow. Those who saw this radiance associated it with the manifesting of Samantabhadra, whose name means 'Universal Goodness and Loving-kindness'.

3. Seigen and Nangaku were Enō's two Dharma heirs.

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We also call this Scripture the *Scripture on the Lotus Flower of the Wondrous Teaching*, for it is the Teaching that trains bodhisattvas. Because this Scripture contains all thoughts and things, both the Divine Vulture Peak and the vast sky exist, as well as the great ocean and the great earth, with the Flower of the Dharma as their native land. As such, this Scripture describes how Truth appears: It is 'just what is, as it is'. It is 'the abode of the Dharma' and 'the invariable state of the Dharma'. It is 'the impermanence of all actions'. It is 'the reason for the One Great Matter for which we train'. It is 'what the Buddha experienced directly'. It is 'what is abiding within the world of appearances'. It is 'what is real'. It is 'the lifespan of a Tathagata'. It is 'what is profound and immeasurable'. It is 'the meditative state of the flowering of the Dharma'. It is 'Shakyamuni Buddha'. It is 'setting the Flower of the Dharma in motion'. It is 'the Flower of the Dharma moving'. It is 'the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching' and 'the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana'. It is 'manifesting in physical form in order to ferry sentient beings to the Other Shore'. And we have the Scripture's promise that "All will ultimately realize Buddhahood," and we have the charge to preserve It.

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During the time of the great T'ang dynasty, a monk named Hōtatsu once came to visit the assembly of Meditation Master Daikan Enō at Hōrin-ji Temple on Mount Sōkei, which is in the region of the eastern road in South China.[4] He said of himself, "I have already read the *Lotus Scripture* aloud three thousand times."

Our Ancestor replied, "Even though you were to recite It ten thousand times, if you have not grasped what It is teaching, you won't even reach the point where you know what your shortcomings are."

Hōtatsu responded, "Student that I am, what a ninny I've been. Up till now, I have just recited It, merely sticking to the words. So, how could I possibly have grasped what they mean?"

Enō replied, "Just as an experiment, recite It, and I will explain It for you."

4. Underlying this narrative of the encounter between Hōtatsu and Enō is the fact that Enō had had a kenshō when, as a very young man, he overheard a passage from the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture* being recited by someone. He himself was illiterate, but had the ability to understand the import of Scriptural passages when they were read to him.

Hōtatsu then began to recite the Scripture. When he reached the section on skillful means, Enō said, "Stop here. The basic point of this Scripture is to tell us the reason behind the Buddha's originally coming into this world. Even though It sets forth many allegories, none ever goes beyond this basic point. And if we ask what was behind this, it was simply the One Great Matter for which we train. 'Just the One Great Matter' is, of course, 'what the Buddha came to know directly'. It was 'His opening up to It, manifesting It, awakening to It, and entering It'. This Matter is, naturally, what a Buddha comes to know directly. Anyone who is equipped with this direct knowing is already a Buddha. By all means, you should have faith here and now that what a Buddha directly knows is right within your very own heart." Enō then added a poem to set this forth:

When the mind wanders onto deluded paths,
It is being set in motion by the flowering of the Dharma;
When the heart awakens,
The Dharma's flowering is set in motion.

However long you recite this Scripture, should it be while still unawakened to the Self that is true,
You will then create an enemy to Its meaning.
To read It without opinion's bonds is the proper way,
But read It bound to fixed ideas, and It becomes error's way.

When you cease to judge whether you are bound or not,
You ride forever long within the cart by the White Ox drawn.

When Hōtatsu heard this poem, he said the following to Enō, "It says in this Scripture that even if all beings—from the greatest shravakas* to the bodhisattvas—were to exhaust the resources of their thinking in measuring the Buddha's spiritually wise discernment, they could not fathom it. Now, you seem to be saying that, if even ordinary people who wander through life in ignorance were to inquire into the Matter for which we train, it could lead them to spiritually awaken their own minds, and that this is precisely what a Buddha realizes through direct experience. But it is difficult for those of us who are not as highly gifted as you to escape from our doubts and skepticism. Further, in this Scripture it speaks of three vehicles, but what is the

distinction between the large ox-cart and the cart drawn by a white ox?[5] I pray that you, venerable monk, will once more favor us with your comments on these matters."

Enō responded, "The intent of the Scripture is clear. It is just that you are wandering off on your own and thereby turning your back on it. Your worry that those of the Three Vehicles* are incapable of fathoming the Buddha's spiritually wise discernment is due to your own way of measuring things. Even though their intellectual resources are being exhausted through their speculations, somehow they will arrive from however far away they may be. As the *Lotus Scripture* says, 'Right from the start, the Buddha explained this for the benefit of ordinary people who are wandering in ignorance; He did not explain it for the benefit of Buddhas.' Although they are not really turning their backs on their faith in this principle, people sometimes do leave their seat of training. But even so, unbeknownst to them, they are sitting in the cart drawn by the White Ox, even while they continue their search for the Three Vehicles outside the gate. In relation to what you have asked, the words of the Scripture clearly state that 'There are not two vehicles, nor are there three.' How come you have not realized this? 'The Three Vehicles' refers to expedient teachings, for it refers to a time that has passed; 'The One Vehicle' refers to the genuine Teaching, for it refers to the present moment in time. You should simply leave behind what is expedient and come back to what is genuine. When you return to the genuine, the Genuine will not be just a name. You need to recognize that what you have is a wondrous and rare Treasure, and that It is fully passed on to you so that It may proceed from you to others, that they may receive It for their use. What is more, even though there is no notion of 'my father' or of 'my son', nor any attribute of 'being useful', this is what we call 'being set in motion by the *Lotus Scripture*'. From one eon to the next, day and night, the Scripture never leaves our hand, and there is no time when we are not reciting It."

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5. The present allusion, as well as many which follow, derive from the parable of the burning house in the *Lotus Scripture*. In that parable, a father attempts to rescue his three children who are playing within a burning house by promising them that they can play with three vehicles—a small sheep-drawn cart, a medium-sized deer-drawn cart, and a large ox-drawn cart—which he says lay outside the gate. When the children go outside the gate they find but one cart, which is drawn by a white ox.

Hōtatsu had, by now, opened up to the Truth and, bouncing up and down with joy, he offered Enō a poem of praise:

The three thousand times that I have recited this Scripture
Have been surpassed by Enō's solitary verse.
Because I was not yet clear as to the purpose of my coming into this world,
How was I to halt the folly of my troubled life?

'Sheep', 'deer', and 'ox' provide but expedient means.
At beginning, middle, and end, they promote the virtuous and the good.
Who within the burning house know
That, from the first, they are lords within the Dharma?

Having been offered this poem, the Ancestor said, "After this, you would do well to call yourself the monk who esteems the *Lotus Scripture*."

That is how the account of Meditation Master Hōtatsu's encounter with Daikan Enō went. The term 'flowering of the Dharma' in such phrases as 'the flowering of the Dharma sets in motion' and 'being set in motion by the Dharma's flowering' began to be used from the time of this event; such phrases had not been heard before then. Truly, the ones to clarify the meaning of 'what a Buddha directly knows' will be those belonging to the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching: they will be Buddhas and Ancestors. This is beyond what can be understood by those textual scholars who vainly count words as if they were pebbles or grains of sand, as we can see from Hōtatsu's past.

To clarify for yourself the fundamental meaning of 'the flowering of the Dharma', you need to realize fully what the Ancestral Master Enō opened up and revealed as the One Great Matter for which we train. Do not try to amuse yourself by inquiring into the other Buddhist vehicles. Now, what the Ancestral Master set forth is the True Nature of the real appearance, real innate nature, real embodiment, real strength, real cause, and real effect of what is set in motion by the flowering of the Dharma. Before the Ancestral Master's time, this was something not yet heard of or even existing in China.

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When we speak of 'what is set in motion by the flowering of the Dharma', we are referring to the mind's wandering off onto deluded paths. And the mind's

delusive wandering, accordingly, refers to what is set in motion by the flowering of the Dharma. That is to say, our mind's wandering off is precisely what is set in motion by the Dharma's flowering. What this means is that, even though the mind's delusions are synonymous with the myriad thoughts and things that arise, the form their True Nature takes is what is aroused by the flowering of the Dharma. This 'being set in motion' is not something to rejoice in, or watch for, or obtain, or arrive at; even so, what the Dharma's flowering sets in motion is precisely 'neither two things nor three'. Since the flowering of the Dharma is our having only One Vehicle to Buddhahood, because it is the flowering of the form of things as they really are, we speak of 'being able to set in motion what moves'. Even so, it is just the One Vehicle to Buddhahood, just the One Great Matter for which we train, just the ever-moving about of the mind as it is, and nothing more. So, do not reproach yourself for your mind's delusions. As the Scripture says, "Whatever is done by you <u>is</u> the way of bodhisattvas," and "The fundamental practice of the Bodhisattva Way is our serving and paying homage to all the Buddhas." Our opening up to this Way, manifesting It, awakening to It, and entering It are, all together, what is set in motion by the Dharma's flowering each and every time. There are our delusions about what is within the burning house, and our delusions about being at the threshold of the gate, and our delusions about what lies outside the gate, and our delusions about what being on the other side of the gate is like, and our delusions about being within the gate.[6] Because, in our delusion, we give rise to such notions as 'being within the gate' and 'being beyond the gate', to say nothing of 'being at the threshold of the gate' and 'being within a burning house', we will, of necessity, open up to It, manifest It, awaken to It, and enter It whilst upon the cart drawn by the White Ox.

When you consider entering the gate from the burning house while riding upon this finely adorned cart, will it be because you are looking hopefully towards the open fields beyond as the place you need to enter, or because you recognize the burning house as the place you need to leave, or because you realize that the threshold of the gate is merely a point to be passed through? You certainly need to realize that when you are within this cart an opening up to, manifesting, awakening to, and entering the burning house may occur, <u>and</u> that when you are within the open fields beyond the gate an opening up to, manifesting, awakening to, and entering the burning house may occur, <u>and</u> that at the threshold of any gate an

6. To paraphrase, people, as a matter of course, speculate on, and thus harbor delusions about, what defiling passions are, what turning one's heart around and vowing to train is, what nirvana is, what the fulfillment of training and practice means, and what doing the training and practice is.

opening up to it, manifesting it, awakening to it, and entering it may occur, and that at any single gate to the Universal Gate an opening up to It, manifesting It, awakening to It, and entering It may also occur. At each instance of opening up, manifesting, awakening, and entering, there is an opening up to, manifesting, awakening to, and entering the Universal Gate. There is set in motion an opening up to, manifesting, awakening to, and entering a gate. There is an opening up to, manifesting, awakening to, and entering what lies outside the gate. And, within the burning house, there is an opening up to, manifesting, awakening to, and entering the open fields beyond.

As a result, the burning house is beyond the intellective mind's ability to fully grasp, and the open fields are beyond that mind's ability to completely know. Who will make into a conveyance the three mundane worlds through which they spin and ride it as the One Vehicle? Who will go back and forth through their opening up, manifesting, awakening, and entering as though such events were a gate? When we seek conveyance from the burning house, how many times the wheel of samsara must turn! When we look upon the burning house from the open fields, how very distant it appears to be! Have you fully realized that the Divine Vulture Peak rests serenely in the open fields? Have you incorporated into your training and practice that open fields are flat and level on the Divine Vulture Peak? That place where 'sentient beings take their delight and play' has continually existed as the Buddha's Pure Land, which can never be destroyed.[7] We must meticulously make this our fundamental practice.

In our wholehearted desire to meet Buddha, do we pursue through our spiritual exploration and practice that Buddha is ourself, or do we pursue through our spiritual exploration and practice that Buddha is some other? There have been times when the Truth was realized as an individual entity, and there have been times when the Truth was realized as the Whole Body. Our appearing together with the Buddha on the Divine Vulture Peak is due to our not begrudging even our own lives. There is an opening up, manifesting, awakening, and entering which is the Buddha's continually abiding here, voicing the Dharma, and there is an opening up, manifesting, awakening, and entering which is the Buddha's skillful means in manifesting what nirvana is. It is our not seeing Buddha, though Such is near; so who, pray, lacks the faith to wholeheartedly grasp That Which Is Beyond Our Grasp? The place that is ever filled with both celestial and human beings is none other than the Realm of Shakyamuni and Vairochana,* a realm that is continually

7. This is taken from "The Immeasurable Life of the Tathagata" section of the *Lotus Scripture.* One translation of this can be found in *Buddhist Writings on Meditation and Daily Practice,* (Shasta Abbey Press, 1994), pp. 27-38.

tranquil and radiant. We who are naturally installed in the Four Realms do, indeed, dwell in the Buddha Realm that is the All.[8] When we are looking at some dust particle, it does not mean that we do not see the whole realm of the universe, and, in our affirming the whole realm of the universe, it does not mean that we are denying any dust particle. So, when all the Buddhas affirm the realm of the Dharma, it does not mean that They exclude us from Their affirmation, which is good in the beginning, middle, and end. Thus, not only is the present moment an aspect of Their affirming that things are just what they are, but also any alarm, doubt, fear, or awe that we may experience in response to Their affirmation can in no way deny the innate nature of what They are affirming. Simply, these responses are only the difference between looking at dust particles with the directness of a Buddha and our sitting down amidst these particles. When we seat ourselves down within the realm of the Dharma, it is not spacious; when we sit amidst dust particles, they are not confining. As a result, without the Buddha's promise of our realizing Buddhahood, there would be no need to sit and, in that all Buddhas promise it, there is no need for alarm or doubt due to spaciousness or limitations, because all the Buddhas have already fully realized the substance and strength of the flowering of the Dharma.

So, should we consider that our present characteristics and innate nature are practicing within the realm of the Dharma or within dust particles? Our characteristics and nature have no alarm or doubt, nor do they have any fear or awe, for they are simply what is profound and enduring: they are that which the basic practice sets in motion within the realm of the Dharma. Our looking at this universe of dust particles and seeing the realm of the Dharma is beyond anything we could ever create or measure. That which we measure and create should also take lessons from what is measured and created by the flowering of the Dharma. When we hear the phrase 'opening up, manifesting, awakening, and entering', we should understand it in relation to a Buddha's desire to help sentient beings. We should take as our model a Buddha's manifesting what a Buddha knows directly, His awakening to what a Buddha knows directly, and His entering into what a Buddha knows directly, all of which is called 'the flowering of the Dharma setting

8. 'The Four Realms' is a Tendai Buddhist technical term for certain spiritual stages. The first is the Realm of Dualistic Thinking, where ordinary, conventional people are seen as living side-by-side with those who are saintly. The second is the Realm of Skillful Means, where inhabitants are guided by the Dharma but have not yet fully realized Its import. The third is the Realm of Bodhisattvas, where marked spiritual results have been achieved and hindrances have been removed. The fourth is the Realm of Continual Tranquility and Radiance.

in motion our opening up to, manifesting, awakening to and entering that which a Buddha knows directly through experience'. In this way, the Dharma Flower's setting in motion our opening up, manifesting, awakening, and entering will be our path to full realization.

In other words, our crossing over to what all the Buddha Tathagatas came to know directly is what is set in motion by the flowering of the Dharma, which is, as the Scripture says, 'great, vast, profound, and far-reaching'. The prediction of our ultimately realizing Buddhahood is, therefore, our own opening up to what a Buddha directly knows, and it is what the flowering of the Dharma sets in motion, which is beyond anything that others teach. This is what is referred to by the statement, "The mind's wandering off onto deluded paths is what is set in motion by the flowering of the Dharma."

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What is called "The mind's awakening sets the flowering of the Dharma in motion" is synonymous with the turning of the flower-like Dharma Wheel. That is to say, when the flowering of the Dharma has thoroughly exerted its influence in arousing us, we, in turn, manifest its influence, just as it is, in arousing ourselves. Our making this manifest is our setting the Flower of the Dharma in motion. Even though what was set in motion by the flowering of the Dharma in the past has continued on, unceasingly, even up to the present, we are, in turn, naturally setting the Flower of the Dharma in motion. Even though our donkey work has not yet come to an end, our horse work will present itself.[9]

Through our reliance on just the One Vehicle, we will accomplish the One Great Matter for which we train as It manifests right here before us. The multitudes of bodhisattvas in the thousands of worlds had long been greatly venerated saintly ones of the Dharma Flower. They poured out from the land upon hearing the Buddha turn the Wheel of the Dharma on the Divine Vulture Peak. They poured forth from the land, being aroused by themselves, and they poured forth from the land, being aroused by some other. We should not make our turning of the Dharma Flower be only for what pours forth from the earth: we should also make it be for

9. In several earlier texts Dōgen has alluded to the saying by Meditation Master Reiun Shigon that one should not wait until the donkey work is done before beginning to do the horse work. In the Zen Buddhist tradition, 'donkey work' is associated with ceasing from evil by using our will to cut through our spiritual fetters, which are the source of our suffering; 'horse work' is associated with doing good by our giving voice to the Dharma to help others to realize the Truth. In the present context, Dōgen gives this traditional understanding a twist, by asserting that doing one's training, in itself, helps others to realize the Truth.

what pours forth from open space. And it is not only the earth and open space that can pour forth. We should also discern with a Buddha's wise discernment the pouring forth of the flowering of the Dharma.

Generally speaking, the time of the Dharma's flowering is inevitably one in which, as the *Lotus Scripture* puts it, "The parent is young and the child is old." This does not mean that the child is not a child, nor does it mean that the parent is not a parent: you should simply explore this as "The child is the one who is old and the parent is the one who is young." Do not follow worldly disbeliefs and thereby be disconcerted, and that which is a worldly disbelief is also a time of the Dharma's flowering. On account of this, we should make our turning of the Dharma Flower be 'that singular time when the Buddha was dwelling in the world'. We come pouring forth from the earth when we are aroused by opening up to, manifesting, awakening to, and entering It, and we come pouring forth from the earth when we are aroused by what a Buddha knows through direct experience. At this time of turning the Flower of the Dharma, there is the mind's awakening due to the Flower of the Dharma, and there is the flowering of the Dharma due to the mind's awakening.

And, the description of the bodhisattvas as 'coming from down below' is synonymous with their 'coming from within space'. This 'down below' and this 'within space' are nothing but the turning of the Dharma Flower, and they are nothing but the lifespan of a Buddha. We should do our turning of the Dharma Flower so that the Buddha's life, the flowering of the Dharma, the realm of the Dharma, and our wholeheartedness manifest both 'down below' and 'within space'. For this reason, what we call 'down below' and 'within space' are nothing but manifestations before our very eyes of the turning of the Dharma Flower. Generally speaking, in our turning of the Dharma Flower at this time, there is that which causes 'the three kinds of grasses' and 'the two kinds of trees' to come to their fruition. This does not mean that we should expect to realize the Truth, nor does it mean that we should be skeptical if we do not.

When we arouse ourselves and give rise to enlightenment, this is what constitutes the southern quarter.[10] This fulfilling of the Way, from the first, was present on the Divine Vulture Peak, where the assembly originally convened in the southern quarter. And there are Buddha Lands in all ten quarters where an assembly has convened in open space, and each is a separate body that sets in motion the flowering of the Dharma. This body of bodhisattvas is already making their turning of the Dharma Flower into the Buddha Lands in all ten quarters, and

10. In the *Lotus Scripture*, the southern quarter is associated with being free of all impurities.

there is no place within those lands where even a single dust particle can enter. There is the turning of the Dharma Flower as "All forms are, in fact, devoid," which means 'being beyond anything's seeming to disappear or emerge'. There is the turning of the Dharma Flower as "That which is devoid is, in fact, any form," which means 'being beyond anything's having birth or death'. We cannot call it 'existing in the world', much less would it be simply 'annihilation'. The One who is an intimate friend to me is an intimate friend to you, me, and everyone else. Because we must not neglect to respectfully bow to our Intimate Friend, we must take care to clearly recognize the times when the pearl in the king's topknot is bestowed and the times when the pearl in the robe is bestowed.[11] There was the turning of the Dharma Flower wherein the jewel-encrusted stupa,* which was five hundred yojanas* high, appeared before the Buddha, and there was the turning of the Dharma Flower wherein a Buddha sat within the stupa, which measured two hundred and fifty yojanas wide. There was the turning of the Dharma Flower as 'a stupa springing forth from the earth and taking up its abode in the sky', wherein the mind was without obstructions and form was without restrictions, and there was the turning of the Dharma Flower as 'a stupa springing forth from the sky and taking up its abode in the earth',[12] which was restricted by the mind and restricted by the body. The Divine Vulture Peak existed within the stupa, and the jewel-encrusted stupa existed on the Divine Vulture Peak. The jeweled stupa made a jeweled stupa of the sky: the sky made an unbounded sky of the jeweled stupa.[13] With the former Buddha within the stupa sitting alongside the Buddha of the

11. References to two parables in the *Lotus Scripture*. In the first, the giving of the Dharma is likened to a king taking the pearl from his topknot and openly bestowing it upon his valiant and capable servant. In the second, it is likened to a rich man who, after serving his impoverished friend a sumptuous meal, slips a precious pearl into the man's robe while the man is sleeping. In the former situation, the servant is aware of the value of what has been bestowed upon him, whereas in the latter, the poor man does not realize what has been given him, much less recognize its value, and he continues through life suffering from feelings of deprivation, even while truly being rich beyond his wildest dreams.

12. The four preceding descriptions of aspects of the turning of the Flower of the Dharma are related to another chapter in the *Lotus Scripture*, wherein a stupa of enormous height and width appears in the sky before the Buddha whilst He is turning the Wheel of the Dharma on the Divine Vulture Peak. Seated within the stupa is a Buddha of long ago, Prabhātaratna Buddha, 'The Buddha Who Abounds in Jewels'. The stupa that settles upon the earth is Dōgen's addition.

13. This sentence is difficult to render into readily comprehensible English, since Dōgen uses the words 'jeweled stupa' and 'sky' not only as nouns but also as verbs: "The stupa stupas in the sky, and the sky skies the stupa."

Divine Vulture Peak, the Buddha of the Divine Vulture Peak experienced the realization of Truth along with the Buddha within the stupa. When the Buddha of the Divine Vulture Peak experienced this realization upon entering the stupa, He entered into the turning of the Dharma Flower, while the physical world and His own body remained intact. When the Buddha within the stupa emerged on the Divine Vulture Peak, He emerged while still in the domain of former Buddhas, and He did so despite His having been extinct for ever so long. Do not follow the views of those ordinary people who wander in ignorance or those of the two Lesser Courses* concerning the meaning of the emergence of the former Buddha and the meaning of the Buddha of the Divine Vulture Peak commencing to turn the Wheel of the Dharma, but just concentrate on setting in motion the flowering of the Dharma.

'Being extinct for ever so long' is an epithet for someone who has experienced the Truth directly. Only those who have the perspective of a Buddha are endowed with this epithet. What the Scripture calls 'within the stupa' and 'before the Buddha', as well as 'the stupa' and 'unbounded space', are beyond a literal understanding of 'the Divine Vulture Peak', beyond 'the realm of Dharma', beyond 'a halfway stage', beyond 'the whole universe'. Nor are they concerned with 'some place within the Dharma'. They are simply different from any form of discriminatory thought.

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Not only is there the turning of the Flower of the Dharma by manifesting in the form of a Buddha for the sake of giving voice to the Dharma, there is also the turning of the Flower of the Dharma by manifesting in the form of a sentient being for the sake of giving voice to the Dharma. There is the turning of the Flower of the Dharma which manifested as 'Devadatta',[14] and there is the turning of the Flower of the Dharma which manifested as 'their departing is also fine'.[15] Do not measure your waiting as being 'sixty eons long', while you look up to the Buddha for help with hands in gasshō.* By cutting short your measuring of your wholehearted waiting, what will arise after a while is what is called 'so many

14. The name of a chapter in the *Lotus Scripture*. Devadatta was Shakyamuni's cousin and disciple. While a senior monk, he caused a schism in the assembly, with five hundred novices following him. Although maintaining that he was still Shakyamuni's disciple, he attempted to kill Shakyamuni. Despite these acts, Shakyamuni predicts in this chapter that Devadatta too will ultimately attain Buddhahood.

15. A reference to what Shakyamuni Buddha said when a group of monks and lay persons left the Divine Vulture Peak midway in His discourse, thinking that they already 'knew it all'.

immeasurable eons', but even so, it is still impossible to put a measurement on the Buddha's wise discernment. How much, pray, does this wholehearted waiting serve as a gauge of the Buddha's wise discernment? Do not think of this turning of the Dharma Flower as simply the Bodhisattva Way as practiced from the very first. The turning of the Dharma Flower at that sole sitting on the Divine Vulture Peak is a turning of the Dharma Flower in the form of the Tathagata giving voice to the Greater Course* this very day. The Flower of the Dharma is the Flower of the Dharma right now; should you not perceive or recognize It, It will be beyond your mind's ability to fully grasp or fully understand.[16] Thus, what is 'five hundred ink drops' for some is but the smallest fraction of time in the turning of the Dharma Flower, for It expounds that the lifetime of Buddha is the ever-flowing of Mind as It is.[17]

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In conclusion, in the several centuries since this *Lotus Scripture* was transmitted to China and employed to set in motion the flowering of the Dharma, those folks who have fashioned commentaries and interpretations for it have abounded. And, due to this Scripture, some of those who have obtained the Dharma have been eminent people. But none of them has caught the meaning of 'the Flower of the Dharma turning' or made use of the import of 'setting the Flower of the Dharma in motion' as our exalted Ancestor, the Old Buddha Daikan Enō, did. Now we hear this teaching, now we encounter it: we can encounter an Old Buddha meeting an Old Buddha. How could this fail to be the Land of Old Buddhas! What a joy it is that the Flower of the Dharma has existed for eon after eon! What a joy it is that there is a flowering of the Dharma day and night! Because the Flower of the Dharma continues from eon to eon and flowers throughout both day and night, even though our own bodies and minds wax and wane in strength, this very waxing and waning is also the flowering of the Dharma. Everything, just as it is, is a rare treasure, a luminous radiance, a place for training in the Way. Everything, just as it is, is great, vast, profound, and far-reaching in its influence; everything is the profound, vast, and far-reaching supreme, fully perfected enlightenment; everything is the mind's wandering off into delusion at the turning of the Dharma Flower; everything is the mind's awakening which turns the Flower of the Dharma;

16. A reference to the children in the burning house who were so absorbed in their play that they did not perceive or recognize what was really going on.

17. In the *Lotus Scripture*, 'five hundred ink drops' constitutes the time it takes to let five hundred drops fall at the rate of one drop per every thousand lands traveled through.

everything is truly the Flower of the Dharma setting in motion the Dharma's flowering.

The mind's wandering is its being turned by the Flower of the Dharma:
The mind's awakening is its turning of the Flower of the Dharma.
If what we fully realize is like this,
It is the Flower of the Dharma setting in motion the flowering of the Dharma.

When we make offerings to It, bow in respect to It, honor It, and praise It, the Flower of the Dharma is the flowering of the Dharma.

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I have written this on a day during the summer retreat in the second year of the Ninji era (1241) to present to a meditator named Edatsu. I am overjoyed that he is leaving lay life behind in order to train in the Way. Just to shave one's head once, even that, is a precious act. To shave one's head again and again: this is to be a true child who has left lay life behind. His leaving lay life behind today is a karmic* recompense, in and of itself, arising solely from the influence of his revolving the Flower of the Dharma in the past. The flowering of the Dharma today must certainly be a flowering which brings to fruition the Flower of the Dharma. It is not Shakyamuni's Dharma Flower, nor is it the Dharma Flower of the Buddhas: it is the Dharma Flower's flowering of the Dharma. Edatsu's being set into motion by the flowering of the Dharma in the past habitually revolved around his not perceiving or recognizing the characteristics of things as they really are. But the flowering of the Dharma today is no longer beyond his mind's ability to fully grasp or understand. In times long past, he breathed It out and breathed It in: at the present time, he breathes It out and breathes It in. This is what we should expect for a flowering of the Dharma that is so marvelously exquisite we cannot even begin to imagine It.

Written by the founder of Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple, the mendicant monk who went to Sung China in order to receive and then transmit the Dharma.

Dōgen

Copied on the third day of midsummer in the second year of the Ninji era (June 13, 1241).

Ejō

17

On 'The Mind Cannot Be Held Onto'

(Shin Fukatoku)

ORAL VERSION

Translator's Introduction: The *Shōbōgenzō* contains two versions of this discourse. The present one is based on a talk Dōgen gave to his disciples. The second, which follows this one, was composed as a written document. While the overall theme and some of the passages are the same, the two versions are sufficiently different to justify including both.

The title and opening line come from the *Scripture on the Diamond-Sharp Wise Discernment That Leads One to the Other Shore*, often referred to simply as the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture*. As with other phrases that Dōgen takes from the Scriptures and from the remarks or writings of Zen Masters, he often expands on their meaning so that no single translation suitably fits all contexts. In the present instance, the meaning of the title phrase shifts from a concern with the transiency of the mind ('the mind cannot be held onto'), to the inability of the intellect to comprehend Buddha Mind ('the mind cannot grasp It'), to the intangible nature of the all-encompassing Mind ('Mind cannot be grasped'). In this translation, where the word *shin* appears in the original, it is rendered as 'Mind' when the reference appears to refer to the Buddha Mind (Buddha Nature), and as 'mind' when referring to the conventional functioning of the intellect. The phrase *fukatoku* is rendered in a variety of ways depending on what seems relevant to the context.

Shakyamuni Buddha once said, "The mind of the past cannot be retained; the mind of the present cannot be held onto; the mind of the future cannot be grasped." This is what the Buddhas and Ancestors have thoroughly explored through Their practice. From within this 'cannot be held onto', They have fashioned the niches and baskets of Their own past, present, and future. Even so, They have made use of the niches and baskets of others in Their tradition.[1] What I call 'Their tradition' is synonymous with Their 'being unable to hold onto the mind'. Our cogitating and discriminating at this very moment is synonymous with our 'being unable to hold onto the mind'. The whole of our physical existence which we use every hour of the day is indeed synonymous with our 'being unable to hold onto the mind'. Once we have entered the private quarters of an Ancestor

1. That is, They have structured Their daily lives from within That which is ungraspable, and They have sometimes borrowed from Their predecessors' ways of spiritually fashioning Their lives.

of the Buddha, we comprehend what 'not being able to hold onto the mind' refers to. But before we have entered the quarters of an Ancestor of the Buddha, no questions about 'Mind cannot be held onto' arise, nor have we made this 'Mind' manifest, nor is It anything we have personally seen or heard about. Those fellows who are engaged in the worldly teaching of texts and the scholarly study of commentaries, as well as those folks who hear but do not apply the Teaching and those who are only interested in their own awakening, exist here and now, without having encountered It even in their dreams. Evidence of this is near at hand, as the following narrative illustrates.

Before Meditation Master Tokusan Senkan's awakening, he used to brag about his skill in elucidating the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture,* even boasting sometimes about his being the Fully Perfected Lord of that Scripture (since his family name Chou meant 'fully perfected'). He claimed to be particularly well up on the commentaries on this Scripture composed by the Chinese scholar Ch'ing-lung. What is more, he had made compilations of a ton of books. And there was no lecturer who could stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the likes of him. But at the same time, he was one of the last in line among those purely academic teachers who were concerned only with analyzing written texts word by word.

One day, he heard that there was an unsurpassed Buddhist Teaching in the South that was being passed on from successor to successor. Inflamed with indignation and armed with Scriptures and other doctrinal texts, he went forth to the South, crossing mountains and rivers. As it happened, he heard about the assembly of Meditation Master Ryūtan Sōshin (who had been Transmitted under Sekitō Kisen). Whilst on his way to this assembly with the intention of joining it, he stopped by the wayside to catch his breath. At that moment, an old woman came up beside him, also stopping by the side of the road to rest a bit. Lecturer Tokusan casually asked her who she was.

> The old woman replied, "I'm just an old woman who sells rice cakes."
>
> Tokusan asked her if she would sell him some for his personal use.
>
> The old woman replied, "Reverend monk, what use would you have for buying them?"
>
> Tokusan said, "I want to buy them to refresh my mind."
>
> The old woman then remarked, "Reverend monk, that load you're carrying with you is really something!"

> Tokusan replied, "Have you not heard of me? I am the Fully Perfected Lord of the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture.* I have so mastered this Scripture that there is nothing in It that I do not understand. What I am carrying with me are my commentaries on the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture.*"
>
> Upon hearing him say this, the old woman asked, "Reverend monk, would you permit an old woman like me to put a question to you?"
>
> Tokusan replied, "You now have my permission to ask whatever you may wish."
>
> The old woman said, "I once heard the part in the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture* where it says, 'The mind of the past cannot be held onto; the mind of the present cannot be held onto; the mind of the future cannot be held onto.' Which mind do you think you will refresh with these rice cakes? If the reverend monk is able to say, I will sell you some rice cakes. If the reverend monk is unable to say, I will not sell you any."
>
> Tokusan, at this moment, was so flabbergasted that he did not recall how he would have customarily responded, whereupon the old woman dismissed him with a flick of her wrist and departed without selling Tokusan any of her rice cakes.

How regrettable that a commentator on hundreds of documents, one who has been a lecturer for decades, was seen through by a poor old woman and could not come up with a response when posed one measly question. It is like the vast difference between, on the one hand, meeting a true teacher, paying heed to a true teacher, and being able to hear the True Teaching and, on the other, not yet having heard the True Teaching nor having encountered a true teacher. This was the occasion when Tokusan first said, "A rice cake painted in a picture cannot satisfy one's hunger." Nowadays, he is admired as one who inherited the Dharma from Ryūtan.

When we reflect deeply upon what is going on in this encounter between the old woman and Tokusan, what Tokusan had not clarified in the distant past can be clearly heard today. Even after he met Ryūtan, he still must have had nightmares about this old woman. He was a latecomer to learning through practice and not some ancient Buddha who had gone beyond being enlightened. Although the old woman had, on that occasion, succeeded in shutting Tokusan's mouth up, it is difficult to establish whether she was, in fact, 'such a person'.* The reason is that,

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* See *Glossary*.

upon hearing the phrase 'the mind cannot be held onto', she may have thought simply that the mind is not something to be obtained or something to be possessed, and therefore spoke to him as she did. If Tokusan had been a solid fellow, he would have had the ability to see through to what the old woman was really getting at. Had he seen through to that, it would have been clear whether she was truly 'such a person'. But Tokusan had not yet become the awakened 'Tokusan', so he was not yet able to know whether she was 'such a person' or not.

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In Great Sung China today, among the novices garbed in the patched robes and broad sleeves of monks, there are those who laugh at Tokusan's inability to respond appropriately and who esteem what they take to be the old woman's sharp wit. This is something that is surely quite pitiful and befuddled, since there are reasons for us to have doubts about the old woman. For instance, at the very moment when Tokusan was unable to speak, the old woman could have turned to him and said, "The reverend monk is unable to respond now, so he should go on and put the question to this old woman, and she, in response, will say something for the reverend monk's benefit." By speaking in this manner, it would be evident that the old woman was what we call 'such a person' if, in response to Tokusan's question, she spoke true. Even though she had a question for him, she had not yet expressed the Matter* herself. Ever since ancient times, no one has been called 'such a person' who has not uttered at least a single word to express It. We can see from Tokusan's past that there is no benefit in constantly bragging about oneself. We can realize by means of the old woman that a person who has not yet expressed It cannot be acknowledged as having realized the Truth.

As an experiment, let us say something in Tokusan's stead. Were the old woman really posing her question from 'that frame of mind', Tokusan might have said to her, "If you are in 'that frame of mind', do not sell me any rice cakes."[2] Had Tokusan spoken in this way, he might have been someone of sharp wit who had learned something through the practice of spiritual training.

Tokusan might have asked the old woman, "The mind of the past cannot be retained; the mind of the present cannot be held onto; the mind of the future cannot be grasped; so which mind do you propose to refresh with your rice cakes?" Were she asked in this way, then she might have responded to Tokusan by saying, "If the

2. 'That frame of mind' is a non-literal rendering of the Japanese *immo* (C. *jen-mo*), a term used in Zen Buddhist writings in relation to someone who is operating from the spiritual certainty of an awakened mind.

reverend monk only knows that rice cakes do not refresh the mind, then he does not know that Mind refreshes the rice cakes or that Mind refreshes the mind."

Were she to speak thus, Tokusan would definitely have had the doubt arise.[3] Then, at that very moment, she should select three rice cakes and hand them over to Tokusan. Just as Tokusan is about to take them, the old woman should say, "The mind of the past cannot be retained; the mind of the present cannot be held onto; the mind of the future cannot be grasped." On the other hand, if Tokusan does not reach out to take them, she might take one of the rice cakes and hit him with it, saying, "You gutless wonder, don't be such a ninny!" Were she to speak like this, should Tokusan respond, then well and good. If he were still unable to say anything, the old woman should say something more for Tokusan's sake. But she only gave him a flick of her wrist and left. Maybe there was a bee in her sleeve.

Tokusan, for his part, does not even say, "I'm unable to say anything. Old woman, will you say something in my stead?" So, not only did he fail to say what he should have said, he also did not ask what he should have asked. What a pity! The old woman's and Tokusan's questions and answers concerning the mind of the past and the mind of the future are merely their mind of the present being unable to grasp It.

Although Tokusan afterwards succeeded in bringing about his awakening to the Light, he did not give the appearance of one who had done so; he was simply someone whose outward demeanor was consistently gruff.[4] Since he trained under Ryūtan for some time, the horns on his head must surely have gotten knocked off, and the pearl from under the dragon's chin would have been authentically Transmitted to him. To merely see the blowing out of a paper candle[5] is insufficient for the Transmission of the Torch.[6]

So, novices who are learning through their training should, beyond doubt, be diligent in their explorations. Those who have treated their training lightly are not right. Those who have been diligent in their explorations are Ancestors of the

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3. That is, he would have doubted that what he had been able to comprehend intellectually was all that there is to realizing spiritual Truth.

4. One effect of a kenshō in an erudite person is their becoming humble and modest.

5. A reference to the account of Tokusan's spiritual awakening, which Dōgen retells in another of his writings called the *Shinji Shōbōgenzō.* Written entirely in a Japanese form of Chinese, it consists of three hundred kōan stories. A translation of Tokusan's story (from Book 2, Kōan 4) is given in the Addendum which follows at the end of this discourse.

6. That is, to be a true Ancestor of the Buddha takes more than having a kenshō; it also requires ceaseless spiritual training and practice.

Buddha. In sum, saying that 'the mind cannot grasp It' is the same as saying that someone has bought a painting of a rice cake, then chewed it all up in one mouthful, savoring its flavor.

Delivered to the assembly during the summer retreat in the second year of the Ninji era (1241) at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple, Uji Prefecture, Yamashiro Province.

Translator's Addendum from Book 2, Kōan 4 of Dōgen's Chinese *Shinji Shōbōgenzō*

For a long time, the monk Tokusan had made a career of lecturing on the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture*. Later on, having heard that the Zen tradition had begun to flourish widely in the South, he could not let the matter rest. Finally, he stopped lecturing and, dismissing his students, headed for the South, armed with manuscripts. For a start, he proceeded to Ryūtan Monastery. He had barely crossed the threshold of the monastery when he said, "For a long time, I have looked for Ryūtan. Now that I have finally arrived, the Abbot himself is nowhere in sight." Ryūtan said, "My child, you have arrived at Ryūtan in person." Tokusan then bowed in respect and withdrew.

When night came on, Tokusan entered the Abbot's quarters, intent on attending upon the Abbot. As the time had grown late, Ryūtan said, "My child, why don't you retire?" At length, Tokusan, setting great store in the Abbot, raised the bamboo curtain and went out. Seeing how dark it was outside, he returned and said, "It is pitch black outside."[7] Ryūtan then took a paper candle and proffered it to Tokusan. Just as Tokusan touched it, Ryūtan blew out the flame, whereupon Tokusan suddenly had a great awakening and immediately bowed in respect. Ryūtan asked. "My child, upon seeing such a thing as this, why did you immediately bow?" Tokusan replied, "From now on, I will not doubt the tongue of our country's venerable monk again."

The next day, Ryūtan said in the Lecture Hall, "You have here this 'real person'. His teeth are like swords; his mouth resembles a basin of blood. Though

7. That is, Ryūtan encourages Tokusan to go ('retire') into meditation ('raise the bamboo curtain'). Deep in meditation ('going out' of the intellective mind), Tokusan confronts his spiritual ignorance ("It is pitch black outside [of my intellect]."), which is what he reports to Ryūtan.

you may strike him with a stick, he does not turn his head. At a later time, he will turn towards the peak of the solitary mountain and leave here to establish my Way."

At length, Tokusan took his manuscripts before the Dharma Hall and made a bonfire of them, expressing the matter by saying, "Though I have penetrated all manner of obscure ways of speaking, it has been like sending a single hair into the great void of space. Although I have fully done what the world considers important, it has resembled letting a single drop of water fall into a vast canyon." As he put the manuscripts into the fire, they were forthwith consumed. Thereupon, he made a respectful obeisance.

18

On 'The Mind Cannot Be Grasped'

(Shin Fukatoku)

WRITTEN VERSION

Translator's Introduction: This discourse was not incorporated into the *Shōbōgenzō* until some time after Dōgen's death. It is likely that he intended the work for his senior monks, since it contains some cautionary remarks about well-known Chinese Meditation Masters that might be misunderstood by novices or lay disciples. These remarks were made as part of a traditional style of Buddhist debate which is undertaken, not as a form of one-upmanship, but as a form of dialectic intended to ferret out the deepest possible Truth. Dōgen's point in refuting these Masters is not that what they said was incorrect, but simply that they did not go far enough in their exploration of the Matter.

At Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple

The Mind that cannot be grasped is what all Buddhas are, for They personally rely upon It as supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. As the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture* says, "The mind of the past cannot be retained; the mind of the present cannot be held onto; the mind of the future cannot be grasped." This expression points to the Buddha's reliance upon the Mind that cannot be held onto, which is what all Buddhas do. It is what They have come to rely upon, saying that It is the unretainable mind of past, present, and future, and that It is the ungraspable Mind of all thoughts and things. If you do not learn from the Buddhas what They are relying upon, which is what makes this matter clear, you will not directly experience It, and if you do not learn from the Ancestors what They are relying upon, you will not be truly Transmitted. 'To learn' means 'to learn from the sixteen-foot-tall body' and 'to learn from a single blade of grass'.[1] 'Learning from the Ancestors' means 'to learn from Their Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow' and 'to learn from the face that broke into a broad smile'.[2] What all this fundamentally

1. The first allusion is to learning from the Buddha's standing up from His meditation posture after having realized enlightenment. The second is to learning from all things, no matter how small, since all things express the Dharma.

2. The first phrase alludes to Bodhidharma's passing on of the Dharma. The second alludes to the Buddha's disciple Makakashō smiling in response to the Buddha's holding aloft the udumbara blossom of His enlightenment.

means is that you should study the Matter* by seeking answers to your questions from a Master to whom the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching has been clearly and correctly Transmitted. This Master has had directly passed on to him what the Mind seal* of Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor has directly and precisely pointed out. Then, beyond question, that Master's Bones and Marrow, Face and Eyes will be passed on to you, and you will receive the Master's Body, Hair, and Skin. If you do not learn the Way of the Buddhas and do not enter the private quarters of an Ancestor, you will not see or hear about It, nor will you understand It. The method for asking about It will be beyond you, and you will not understand the means for expressing It, even in your dreams.

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When Tokusan, in his earlier days, was still not a solid fellow, he had excelled in the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture*. People at that time called him Chou, the Fully Perfected Lord of the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture*. He was king among more than eight hundred scholars. Not only was he well versed in the commentaries, particularly those by the Chinese scholar Ch'ing-lung, but he had also edited a ton of writings, and there was no lecturer who could stand shoulder-to-shoulder with him. When he happened to hear that there was an unsurpassed Buddhist Teaching in the South, a Teaching that was being passed on from successor to successor, he went there, crossing mountains and rivers, loaded down with his own manuscripts. He had stopped to catch his breath by the side of the road that led to Master Ryūtan's temple, when an old woman came by. Tokusan asked her who she was.

> The old woman replied, "I am an old woman who sells rice cakes."
>
> Tokusan asked her, "Will you sell me some rice cakes?"
>
> The old woman said, "Reverend monk, why would you want to buy them?"
>
> Tokusan replied, "I would buy your rice cakes so that I might refresh my mind."
>
> The old woman remarked, "Reverend monk, that load you're carrying with you is really something!"
>
> Tokusan replied, "Have you not heard of me? I am the Fully Perfected Lord of the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture*. I have so mastered this Scripture that there is nothing in It that I do not understand. What

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* See *Glossary*.

> I am carrying with me are my commentaries on the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture*."
>
> Upon hearing him say this, the old woman asked, "Reverend monk, would you permit an old woman like me to put a question to you?"
>
> Tokusan replied, "Yes, ask whatever you may wish."
>
> She said, "I once heard the part in the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture* where it says, 'The mind of the past cannot be held onto; the mind of the present cannot be held onto; the mind of the future cannot be held onto.' Which mind do you think you are going to refresh with these rice cakes? If the reverend monk is able to say, I will sell him some rice cakes. If the reverend monk is unable to say, I will not sell him any rice cakes."
>
> Tokusan, at this moment, was so flabbergasted that he could not recall how he would have customarily responded, whereupon the old woman dismissed him with a flick of her wrist and left without selling Tokusan any of her rice cakes.

How regrettable that a commentator on hundreds of documents, one who had been a lecturer for decades, was seen through by a poor old woman posing one measly question. It is like the vast difference between someone having a true teacher and someone not having one, between someone seeking answers to one's questions in the private quarters of a true teacher and someone not entering the private quarters of a true teacher. There are people who, upon hearing the phrase 'cannot be grasped', have simply assumed that there is nothing to be attained in either case, for these people lack the living pathway of practice. Further, there are those who say that It cannot be grasped because it is said that we already possess It from the first. How does that hit the mark?

It was on this occasion that Tokusan understood for the first time that a rice cake in a picture does not slake one's hunger. He also realized that, in training and practicing in the Way of the Buddhas, one by all means needs to meet 'such a person'.* In addition, he realized that someone who is uselessly caught up only in commenting on the Scriptures cannot attain true spiritual strength. Ultimately, he trained under Ryūtan, and after the path of Master and disciple manifested before his very eyes, he unquestionably became 'such a person'. Nowadays, he is recognized not only as an Ancestral predecessor of Ummon and Hōgen, but also as a teacher and guide both of ordinary people and of those in loftier positions.

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When we consider this narrative today, we can see that Tokusan, long ago, had not yet clarified the Matter. Although nowadays we say that the old woman had succeeded in shutting up Tokusan's mouth, it is difficult to establish whether she was, in fact, 'such a person'. We may conjecture that, having heard the phrase 'the mind cannot be grasped' much earlier, she may have simply thought that the mind was something that could not be possessed, and therefore asked him about it in the way that she did. If Tokusan had been a solid person, he would have had the spiritual strength to be prudent in his responses. Had he been prudent, he would have been able to discern whether the old woman was 'such a person', but, since it was at a time when Tokusan was not yet the awakened 'Tokusan', he was not yet able to recognize whether the old woman was indeed 'such a person'.

What is more, we today are not short of reasons for having doubts about the old woman. When Tokusan was unable to speak, why didn't the old woman question him further? She could have said, "You, my reverend monk, are unable to respond now, so you should go ahead and put the question to this old woman, and I, in response, will say something for the reverend monk's benefit." Then, upon hearing her own question from Tokusan, if she had some response for him, it would be evident whether or not the old woman had the ability to speak true.

In this way, someone who has the Bones and Marrow, Face and Eye of those who trained in the past, as well as the radiance and vivacity of the old Buddhas—all of which are due to having the wherewithal from doing the same spiritual practice as They did—will not be concerned about either holding onto or letting go of such notions as 'Tokusan', 'the old woman', 'not being able to grasp', 'being able to grasp', 'rice cakes', or 'Mind'.

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What we call 'Buddha Mind' is synonymous with the three temporal worlds of past, present, and future. This Mind and the three temporal worlds are not separated from each other by so much as one single hair's breadth. Even so, when we are discussing the two as things that are distinct and separate from each other, then they are farther apart than eighteen thousand breadths of hair. Thus, if I were asked what the phrase "This is the mind of the past" means, I would have to say in response, "This cannot be grasped." If I were asked what the phrase "This is the mind of the present" means, I would have to say in response, "This cannot be grasped." If I were asked what the phrase "This is the mind of the future" means, I would say in response, "This cannot be grasped."

As to the mind of which I am speaking, if I say that there is Mind, which at the present moment is described as 'Mind that cannot be grasped,' then I say, "At the present moment, It cannot be grasped." I do not say, "The mind cannot be grasped," I say in all earnestness, "It cannot be grasped." I do not say, "The mind can be grasped," I say in all earnestness, "It cannot be grasped." Further, should you ask me, "What is the mind of the past which cannot be grasped?" I would say, "It is synonymous with being born and dying, going and coming." Should you ask, "What is the mind of the present which cannot be grasped?" I would say, "It is synonymous with being born and dying, going and coming." Should you ask, "What is the mind of the future which cannot be grasped?" I would say, "It is synonymous with being born and dying, going and coming."

In sum, there is Buddha Mind, which is the fences and walls, tiles* and stones, and all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds directly experience It as something that cannot be held onto. There are only the fences and walls, tiles and stones, which are Buddha Mind, and all Buddhas directly experience It in the three temporal worlds as ungraspable. What is more, That which is ungraspable within the great earth with its mountains and rivers exists there by Its very nature. That which is ungraspable in grasses and trees, wind and water, accordingly, is Mind. Also, It is what is ungraspable in "Letting our mind abide nowhere and giving rise to the Mind."[3] And also, the Mind Beyond Grasping, which gives voice to the eighty thousand Gates by means of all the Buddhas throughout all generations everywhere, is the same as this.

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To cite another example, during the time of National Teacher Echū, Tripitaka Master Daini arrived at the capital from far-off India, letting it be known publicly that he had the ability to read the minds of others.[4] When the T'ang Emperor Su-tsung charged the National Teacher to examine this claim, no sooner had the Tripitaka Master laid eyes on the National Teacher than he immediately made a full prostration before the National Teacher and then stood to his right.[5]

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3. This quotation is the line from the *Diamond-Cutting Scripture* which triggered Enō's realization of Truth before he left lay life.

4. 'National Teacher' is a Chinese imperial title conferred upon a monk whose devotion to spiritual life has been exemplary. Echū served as the emperor's personal spiritual advisor. 'Tripitaka Master' is a secular title which might be comparable to the present-day 'professor of Buddhology'; it does not imply that the person was necessarily a monk or even a practicing Buddhist. The *Tripitaka* is the general name for the canon of Buddhist Scriptures.

5. That is, in the position that is least confrontational.

Thereupon, the National Teacher asked him, "Do you have the ability to read the minds of others or not?"

The Tripitaka Master replied in a humble tone, "I would not dare to make such a claim."

The National Teacher then said, "Speak! In what place is this old monk now?"

The Tripitaka Master responded, again with a humble tone, "The reverend monk is indeed the teacher of this nation, so why does he go to the Western River and watch people racing around in their boats?"[6]

After a rather long time, the National Teacher asked him again, "Speak! In what place is this old monk now?"

The Tripitaka Master replied all humbly, "The reverend monk is the teacher of this nation, so why does he go to Tientsin Bridge and watch people playing with their pet monkeys?"[7]

The National Teacher again asked, "Speak! In what place is this old monk now?"

Although the Tripitaka Master remained there quite a long time, he did not know what to say.

The National Teacher rebuked him, saying, "O you wild fox spirit, where is your ability to read minds now?"

The Tripitaka Master still had no response.[8]

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6. 'The Western River' flows through the Western Paradise. The Tripitaka Master is saying, in effect, "Why do you, who are so saintly that you are already in the Western Paradise, bother to pay any attention to us ordinary people who are engaged in worldly, competitive pursuits?"

7. While Tientsin is the name of a major Chinese metropolis, 'Tientsin Bridge' literally means 'the bridge that leads into the Harbor of Heaven'. The Tripitaka Master is saying in effect, "Why do you, who are standing on the very bridge of Heaven, concern yourself with us worldly people who are preoccupied with playing around with our everyday minds?" Both this and the previous statement are offering seemingly flattering but spiritually meaningless remarks in response to the National Teacher's deeply spiritual question, all the while still hinting that he could, indeed, read the minds of others.

8. Evidently, the Tripitaka Master realized that what he was being asked for required something beyond 'parlor Zen' responses, but because he did not know what the True Mind of the National Teacher was, he was unable to reply. 'A wild fox spirit' is a term used negatively in Zen Buddhism for a clever and manipulative person who gives teachings that are false and misleading.

Not to know about such matters is bad enough, but not to have heard about them, what a pity! The Ancestors of the Buddha and those who are academic scholars of the *Tripitaka* are not equal; they are as different as heaven and earth. The Ancestors of the Buddha, having clarified what the Buddha Dharma is, are in That Place; academic scholars of the *Tripitaka* have not yet clarified what It is. Truly, when it comes to scholars of the *Tripitaka*, even ordinary people have been scholars of the *Tripitaka*. They are comparable, for instance, to those who seek for position in the literary world. So, even though the Tripitaka Master may have had a broad comprehension of the languages of India and China, as well as having been trained in reading the minds of others, nevertheless, when it came to 'Body and Mind in the Way of the Buddhas', he had never seen a thing even in his dreams.[9] As a result, in his interview with the National Teacher, who had directly experienced the level of the Ancestors of the Buddha, the Tripitaka Master was seen through. In learning what 'Mind in the Way of the Buddhas' means, we need to know that the myriad thoughts and things <u>are</u> Mind, and the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form are nothing but Mind. It will be a matter of nothing but Mind being nothing but Mind: it will be a matter of this Buddha being your very mind. Be there a self, be there an other, neither must be mistaken for the 'Mind in the Way of the Buddhas'. Do not vainly drift down the Western River; do not stroll about on Tientsin Bridge. Whoever would preserve and accept responsibility for 'Body and Mind in the Way of the Buddhas' needs to learn how to function from the spiritually wise discernment of the Buddha's Way.

What we call 'in the Way of the Buddhas' means that the whole world is Mind, without Its being changed by anything that arises or disappears. And it means that the whole of the Dharma is Mind. And we also need to experience the whole of Mind as the functioning of spiritually wise discernment. The Tripitaka Master had not seen this before, for he was simply a wild fox spirit. So, even the first two times that the National Teacher said to him, "Speak!" he had not seen the Mind of the National Teacher, for he had not penetrated to the Mind of the National Teacher. He was a wild fox cub who was idly playing around with the Western River and Tientsin Bridge, with boat races and monkeys, so how could he possibly have seen the National Teacher?

Further, the reason is quite clear why he could not see the place where the National Teacher was. When asked three times, "In what place is this old monk now?" he did not listen to these words. If he had listened, he would have been able to answer, but, since he did not listen, he overlooked it. Had the Tripitaka Master

9. The phrase 'Body and Mind in the Way of the Buddhas' can be understood as a reference to the True Nature of Body and Mind as seen from the perspective of an enlightened mind.

directly experienced the Buddha Dharma by doing his training, he would have understood what the National Teacher was saying, and he would have seen the Body and Mind of the National Teacher. Because he had not directly experienced the Buddha Dharma through undertaking spiritual training in daily life, he had let a chance to hear It vainly slip by, even though it might be said that he had been born to meet one who was a teacher and guide both of ordinary people and of those in loftier positions. How sad and pitiful!

Speaking in general, how could a worldly scholar of the *Tripitaka* possibly match the everyday practice of the Buddhas and Ancestors, or recognize the whereabouts of the National Teacher? And what is more, Indian academic students of the *Tripitaka* could never recognize the everyday practice of the National Teacher.[10] But any academic teacher or arrogant scholar could surely understand what the Tripitaka Master knew. How could what pedestrian teachers or arrogant scholars know possibly match the powers of wise discernment of bodhisattvas* about to realize Buddhahood, or even of those 'thrice wise and ten times saintly'?* The Body and Mind of the National Teacher cannot be recognized by an arrogant scholar. Indeed, It is not yet clearly comprehended even by bodhisattvas about to realize Buddhahood.

Comments about Body and Mind in our various Buddhist traditions are like those in the following discussions. You need to understand them and trust in them, for the Dharma of our great teacher, the Venerable Shakyamuni, has never been like the teachings of the wild foxes following the Lesser Two Courses* or non-Buddhist ways. This is why, from olden times, this one story has been thoroughly examined by venerable Masters in various generations.

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> There was a monk who once asked Jōshū, "Why didn't the Tripitaka Master see where the National Teacher was the third time?" Jōshū replied, "He did not see where the National Teacher was because he was right on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose."
>
> Also, there was a monk who once asked Gensha Shibi, "Since the National Teacher was already right on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose, why didn't he see it?" Shibi replied, "Simply because he was just too close."
>
> Kaie Shutan once commented on Shibi's reply, "If the National Teacher was right on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose, why was

10. Namely, his practice of devoting himself to helping all sentient beings realize the Truth.

> he having such difficulty seeing it? After all, he did not recognize that the National Teacher was right inside the Tripitaka Master's Eye."
>
> Also, Shibi, as if challenging the Tripitaka Master, once remarked, "You, say! Did you even see It the first two times?"
>
> Setchō Jūken later commented on that remark, "Seen through the first time! Seen through the second time!"
>
> Also, there was a monk who once asked Kyōzan, "Why didn't the Tripitaka Master see the whereabouts of the National Teacher the third time, since he was there a rather long time?" Kyōzan replied, "The first two times, the National Teacher's mind was in the realm of externals. He then entered the meditative state of delight in the True Self, so the Tripitaka Master could not perceive his whereabouts."

Although these five venerable Masters were all clearly on the mark, they overlooked the National Teacher's everyday practice. That is, they only discuss the Tripitaka Master's failure to know the third time, so it looks as though they were conceding that he knew the previous two times. So, this is something that these former worthies have overlooked.

The concerns that I now have about these five venerable Masters are twofold. The first is that they do not recognize the intent behind the National Teacher's way of examining the Tripitaka Master. The second is that they do not recognize the National Teacher's Body and Mind.

First of all, as to my saying that they apparently did not recognize the intent behind the National Teacher's way of examining the Tripitaka Master, there is the question of what the National Teacher intended when he exclaimed, "Speak! In what place is this old monk now?" At the time, he was inquiring into whether or not the Tripitaka Master understood the Buddha Dharma. If the Tripitaka Master had ever heard the Buddha Dharma, he would have been able to see how the words he heard as "In what place is this old monk now?" conformed to the Buddha Dharma. As to being in conformance with the Buddha Dharma, the National Teacher's saying, "In what place is this old monk now?" is asking, in effect, "Is It here? Or is It there? Is It unsurpassed enlightenment? Or is It the wisdom that ferries others to the Other Shore? Is It dependent on unbounded space? Or is It standing on solid ground? Is It the hermit's grass hut? Or is It the Treasure House?" The Tripitaka Master did not recognize this intent, so he proffered the opinion of, say, an ordinary person who wanders through life in ignorance or one who follows the two Lesser Courses. The National Teacher again asked, "Speak! In what place is this old monk now?" Hereupon, the Tripitaka Master again proffered idle words. Again the National Teacher asked, "Speak! In what place is

this old monk now?" The Tripitaka Master now said nothing, though a considerable time passed. His mind was blank. The National Teacher then rebuked him, saying, "O you wild fox spirit, where is your ability to read minds now?" Upon the National Teacher's speaking in this way, the Tripitaka Master still had nothing to say.

When we consider this story carefully, the former worthy Masters all held the view that the National Teacher was rebuking the Tripitaka Master because, even though he had known the National Teacher's whereabouts the first two times, he did not know it the third time. But this is not the case. In brief, he rebuked the Tripitaka Master for being merely a wild fox spirit, someone who had not encountered the Buddha Dharma even in his dreams. He did not say that the Tripitaka Master did or did not know it the first two times. His rebuke was intended for the Tripitaka Master in general. As to the National Teacher's intent, he was wondering in the first place whether one could call the Buddha Dharma the ability to read the minds of others. Further, the National Teacher was thinking that, even though one may speak of the ability to read the mind of another, one would need to understand 'other', 'mind', and 'the ability to read' according to the Way of the Buddhas. But what the Tripitaka Master was saying was not in accord with the Way of the Buddhas, so how could it possibly be called the Buddha Dharma?" As to his examining the Tripitaka Master, even if the latter were to have said something the third time, if it was anything like the first two times, it would not reflect the principles of Buddha Dharma or the National Teacher's intent—which is why the National Teacher needed to rebuke him. As to the National Teacher's asking three times, he asked again and again in order to find out whether, at any time, his words were understood by the Tripitaka Master.

Second, as to my saying that the five worthy Masters did not recognize the Body and Mind of the National Teacher, the Body and Mind of the National Teacher was beyond the Tripitaka Master's ability to recognize, beyond his ability to read. The ten times saintly and thrice wise are not up to it, and it is beyond both those who are about to become Buddhas and those who have just awakened, so how could an ordinary Tripitaka Master possibly recognize it?[11] You must determine what this principle is so that you have no doubts about it. Anyone who would hold that the Tripitaka Master could recognize what the Body and Mind of the National Teacher was—and be a match for it—is, accordingly, someone who does not in the least recognize the Body and Mind of the National Teacher. If you were to say that those folks who pursue the ability to read the minds of others can

11. 'Those who have just awakened' is a rendering of a technical Buddhist term for someone who has just had a kenshō but does not recognize the full import of that experience.

recognize the Body and Mind of the National Teacher, then can those of the two Lesser Courses also recognize it? Because this is not so, people involved in the two Lesser Courses cannot possibly reach even the environs of the National Teacher. Nowadays, there are many in the two Lesser Courses who read the Mahayana* Scriptures, but they too cannot recognize the Body and Mind of the National Teacher, and, furthermore, they cannot see the Body and Mind of Buddha Dharma even in their dreams. Although they may imitate those who read and recite the Mahayana Scriptures, you must clearly recognize that they are, through and through, persons of the Lesser Courses. In short, the Body and Mind of the National Teacher is beyond anything that can be recognized by those folks who chase after spiritual abilities or who practice in order to have 'a spiritual experience'. The Body and Mind of the National Teacher might be difficult even for the National Teacher himself to gauge or fathom. And why is that? His everyday practice had long been free of any designs to 'become a Buddha', so even the Eye of a Buddha could not spot it. In his everyday comings and goings, he had clearly let go of his cobwebs and dark places, and was beyond anything that a cage could imprison or a net ensnare.

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We can now look at what each of the five worthy Masters was getting at.

Jōshū said, "He did not see where the National Teacher was because he was right on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose." What does this remark mean? Errors are likely to occur when we state a conclusion without making clear its source. How could the National Teacher possibly be right on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose? The Tripitaka Master had not yet recognized that he had a Nose.[12] Further, even though it would appear that the National Teacher and the Tripitaka Master had a connection that would allow them to 'see each other', there was no pathway near enough on which they could approach each other. Those who are clear-eyed will surely be able to discern this.

Shibi said, "Simply because he was just too close." Truly, his being 'just too close' may well have been the case, but the phrase misses the point. What is it that he is calling 'just too close'? What does he understand as being 'just too close'? Shibi had not yet recognized the Tripitaka Master's being 'just too close', nor had Shibi thoroughly examined his being 'just too close'. For, when it comes to Buddha Dharma, the Tripitaka Master was the farthest of the far off.

12. That is, the Tripitaka Master had not yet seen his Buddha Nature, which is as immediate as if It were on the tip of the nose.

Kyōzan replied, "The first two times, the National Teacher's mind was in the realm of externals. He then entered the meditative state of delight in the True Self, so the Tripitaka Master could not perceive his whereabouts." In India, Kyōzan would have been acclaimed far and wide as a veritable 'Little Shakyamuni' for this reply, but his remark is not entirely accurate. If he is saying that the place of their meeting each other face-to-face was, indeed, in the realm of externals, this is tantamount to asserting that the place where Buddhas and Ancestors meet each other face-to-face does not exist. That assertion would make it look as if Kyōzan had not learned the spiritual merits of realizing Buddhahood as the Buddha predicted. Kyōzan is saying that the first two times the Tripitaka Master truly knew the whereabouts of the National Teacher; he should have said that the Tripitaka Master did not recognize even a single hair of the spiritual merits of the National Teacher.

Shibi, in challenging the Tripitaka Master, remarked, "Did you even see It the first two times?" Though his phrase, "Did you even see It?" seems to say what needs to be said, it does imply that what the Tripitaka Master saw resembled That which goes beyond seeing. Therefore, it is not right on the mark.

Hearing of this remark, Clearly Enlightened Meditation Master Setchō commented, "Seen through the first time! Seen through the second time!" When Setchō took what Shibi said to be the correct way to put it, he could quite rightly speak like this. But had he recognized that it was not the correct way to put it, he would not have spoken as he did.

Kaie Shutan said, "If the National Teacher was right on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose, why was he having such difficulty seeing it? After all, he did not recognize that the National Teacher was right inside the Tripitaka Master's Eye." This, too, is discussing only the third time. In that Shutan is not looking at the first two times, he is not rebuking the Tripitaka Master for the right reason. So, even though the National Teacher was on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose and within his very eyeballs, how would Shutan know it?

Every one of these five worthy Masters was blind to what the National Teacher had spiritually achieved; their diligent efforts to practice the Buddha Dharma seem not to have approached his. You need to realize that the National Teacher was none other than a first generation Buddha, for he had clearly had Transmitted to him the Buddha's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. Moreover, people such as Lesser Course academic commentators on the *Tripitaka* do not recognize the whereabouts of the National Teacher, and this story that we have been discussing is the proof. What those in the Lesser Course call 'the ability to read the mind of another' should be called 'the ability to read the intention of another'. It is a mistake to imagine that the ability of a Tripitaka Master of the

Lesser Course to read the minds of others is strong enough for such a one to recognize a single hair, or even a half a hair, of the National Teacher. One thing to earnestly learn from this is that a Tripitaka Master of the Lesser Course is totally unable to see where the spiritual accomplishments of the National Teacher are located. If, for example, the Tripitaka Master knew the whereabouts of the National Teacher the first two times but did not know it the third time, this would have been two times out of three, and he ought not to have been rebuked. But, even if he were rebuked, it would not have been for a total lack of ability. Had he been rebuked for this, who would have any confidence in the National Teacher? The National Teacher's intention was to rebuke the Tripitaka Master for being altogether lacking in the Body and Mind of the Buddha Dharma. In that the five worthy Masters did not at all understand the everyday practice of the National Teacher, they are, to that extent, similarly inaccurate. For this reason I have now let you hear about 'the mind not being able to grasp It' in the Way of the Buddhas. Although it may be hard for you to believe that people who are unable to thoroughly understand this one aspect of the Teaching are apt to understand all the rest of the Teaching, you need to realize that ancient Ancestors may also make mistakes and compound them, as in this case.

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A monk once asked the National Teacher, "Just what is the mind of the past Buddhas?"

The National Teacher replied, "Fences and walls, along with their tiles and stones."

This is also 'the mind cannot be grabbed hold of'.

Another time, a monk asked the National Teacher, "Just what is the constant mind of all Buddhas?"

The National Teacher replied, "How fortunate that you have bumped into this old monk on his way to pay a visit to the emperor's palace!"

This also thoroughly explores 'the Mind that cannot be grasped'.

On another occasion, a veritable Lord Indra asked the National Teacher, "How can we possibly get free of the effects of karma?"*

The National Teacher replied, "O Heavenly One, you can free yourself from the effects of karma by training in the Way."

This Lord Indra then asked, "What could this 'way' you speak of possibly be?"

The National Teacher responded, "Your mind at this very moment is the Way."

The Lord Indra then asked, "And what is this mind of mine at this very moment?"

The National Teacher, pointing with his finger, said, "It is the very pedestal of enlightenment: It is the very net of pearls."

The Lord Indra bowed in respect.

In sum, you will often meet with talk about 'Body and Mind in the Way of the Buddhas' in the assemblies of Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor. When we learn of both Body and Mind together, through our training, They are beyond what ordinary people, as well as the wise and the saintly, imagine or perceive Them to be. "The Mind cannot be held onto" is to be thoroughly examined through your practice.

A day during the summer retreat in the second year of the Ninji era (1241).

19

On the Ancient Mirror

(Kokyō)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse, Dōgen explores a number of metaphorical references to mirrors as they appear in various writings from Zen Buddhism and Shintō, the native religion of Japan. In particular, he identifies three types of mirror—the Great Round Mirror, the Clear Mirror, and the Ancient Mirror—and discusses how these three are interrelated, while still distinguishable from each other.

It may be helpful to keep in mind that *kokyō* can be rendered not only as the Ancient Mirror but also as the Mirror of Old and the Mirror of Former Buddhas.

Further, Dōgen's references to physical mirrors are to those made from metal that was cast in a flat, circular mold and then highly polished on one side. It was not uncommon for such mirrors, in time, to be broken up and recast into Buddhist statuary, which was left unpolished.

As with a few of Dōgen's earlier discourses, some readers may find it useful to read this one, in particular, more than once, since there are a number of places where the import of what Dōgen is saying only becomes clear when later passages are encountered. I have refrained from making explanatory comments at these places, lest such remarks undermine the effects of Dōgen's particular 'alogical' manner of presentation.

What all Buddhas and Ancestors accept, preserve, and individually pass on is the Ancient Mirror. It is Their same view and Their same face: It is Their same image and Their same casting, for They have done the same training and have realized the same Truth. When foreigners come, foreigners appear in It, be they eight thousand or a hundred thousand; when Han come, Han appear in It, be it for a single moment or for all of time.[1] When things of the past come, things of the past appear in It; when things of the present come, things of the present appear in It. When a Buddha comes, a Buddha appears in It; when an Ancestor comes, an Ancestor appears in It.

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1. This statement is based on one made by the Chinese Zen Master Seppō, which Dōgen discusses later in this discourse. 'Han' is the name that the Chinese use to refer to themselves, as distinct from 'foreigners'. In Zen texts, it is also used as a term for those who are enlightened to their Buddha Nature, as well as for Buddha Nature in general. In addition, 'Han and foreigner' carries the connotation of what we consider to be part of us and what we view as separate from ourselves. 'A hundred thousand' is often used to express the idea of one hundred percent of all the various kinds of something; 'eight thousand' would, by contrast, convey the notion of a small sampling of those things.

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The Eighteenth Ancestor, the Venerable Kayashata, was a person from the state of Magadha in the western region of India. He was of Udraka's clan.[2] His father's name was T'ien-kai and his mother's was Fang-sheng.[3] His mother once saw in a dream what she described as a great deity who was carrying a large mirror and who had come to greet her. She associated this with her being pregnant. Seven days later, she gave birth to the Master. At the time of his birth, his body was like lustrous porcelain. Before he had even been bathed, his body was sweet smelling and clean. From his earliest days, he was fond of quietude, and his way of putting things differed from that of ordinary children.

From the time he was born, a clear and bright round mirror naturally appeared along with him—the round mirror being the Completely Perfect Mirror—a rare occurrence in any generation. Saying that the round mirror appeared along with him does not mean that the mirror was born from his mother. The Master was in her womb, and then, at the same time that he emerged from her womb, the round mirror showed up, spontaneously manifesting itself right near him, as if it were some everyday household object. The significance of this term 'round mirror' goes beyond the conventional meaning. Whenever the child approached anyone, it was as if he was holding a round mirror up in front of him with his two hands —yet it did not conceal the child's face. As the child departed, it was as if he was leaving with the round mirror carried upon his back—yet it did not conceal the child's body. When the child was sleeping, the round mirror hung above him, resembling a canopy of flowers. When the child was sitting upright, the round mirror was right before his face. In sum, the two accompanied each other, regardless of his demeanor or his behavior, whether he was active or still.

Not only that, but by looking into this round mirror he was able to see all the activities of Buddhas past, present, and future. Also, at no time were any of the everyday doings of either ordinary people or those in lofty positions clouded from his sight as they floated across the round mirror. For example, by looking in this mirror, he could clarify what had been illumined both in the past and in the present better than others could by resorting to Scriptural texts or secular writings. Nevertheless, when the child left home to be a monk and took the Precepts, the round mirror ceased to manifest before the eyes of others from that time on.[4]

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2. Udraka Ramaputra was one of Shakyamuni Buddha's teachers before His enlightenment.

3. Tien-kai means 'He Who is a Heavenly Canopy of Light'; Fang-sheng means 'She Who is Saintly in All Ways'.

4. That is, he ceased to appear as someone different or special.

Thus it was that people in nearby villages, as well as those from a considerable distance, all praised this manifestation as something rare and wondrous, for truly, its like is rarely encountered in this everyday world of ours. Even so, we should be prudent and not be surprised if there are similar offspring in families elsewhere. Beyond doubt, we should recognize that there are passages from the Scriptures that have been transformed into such things as trees and stones, and that there are spiritual friends who are spreading the Teaching through field and town. These too must surely be round mirrors. And the Scripture scrolls we have today, with their yellowed paper and their red spindles, are also round mirrors.

Then one day, while he was out and about, Kayashata came upon the Venerable Sōgyanandai. He immediately stepped forward and went up to the Venerable Sōgyanandai. The venerable one asked the child, "That which you have in your hands, is it truly what the What shows?" Once you realize that he is not asking, "What does that which you have show?" you should examine his remark carefully. Kayashata replied in verse:

The Great Round Mirror of all Buddhas
Is neither flawed within nor beclouded without.
We two can see It the same way,
For we are alike in both Mind and Eye.

Since what he said is so, how could the Great Round Mirror have been born at the same time as Kayashata? Kayashata's life, from the time he was born up to that very moment, was the brightness of the Great Round Mirror. All Buddhas train alike and see alike: all Buddhas are cast images of the Great Round Mirror. The Great Round Mirror is not sagacity, nor is It intellectual reasoning; It is not one's True Nature or Its outer form. Although the term 'the Great Round Mirror' exists within the Teaching of the 'thrice wise and ten times saintly',* it is not the same as 'the Great Round Mirror of all Buddhas' that he just spoke of. Because all Buddhas are unquestionably beyond sagacity, all Buddhas have wise discernment, and wise discernment is not to be taken as what all Buddhas are.

Talking about wisdom is not the best way to voice what the Buddha taught. You need to realize this by investigating it through your training and practice. Even if we experience the Great Round Mirror of all Buddhas as having been born at the same time that we were, there are the following facts. This Great Round Mirror of which we are speaking might not be experienced in your life or in the life of another. It is not a mirror made from jewels, or a mirror made from copper, or a

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* See *Glossary*.

mirror made from flesh, or a mirror made from marrow. Was the poem what the Round Mirror voiced, or was the poem what the child spoke? The child's giving voice to this four-line poem was not something that he had ever learned through scholarly study with anyone, or through perusing works of Scripture, or through following a spiritual friend: he spoke as he did whilst holding the Round Mirror aloft. From the time he was a child, he was always accustomed to facing the Mirror. It was as if he had been born with the knowledge of how to put wise discernment into expression. Was the Great Round Mirror born at the same time as the child, or was the child born at the same time as the Great Round Mirror? Surely it is possible that one was born before the other. The Great Round Mirror is neither more nor less than the meritorious actions of all Buddhas.

When we say that this Mirror is unstained both within and without, we mean that It is not an inside that depends upon something outside, or an outside blurred by something inside. It has never had a front and a back: both perspectives can be viewed alike, for the Mind and Eye of Sōgyanandai and Kayashata resembled each other. 'Resembling each other' means that 'a person' has encountered another 'person'. Even the forms and images within have minds and eyes, and can likewise see: even the forms and images without have minds and eyes, and can likewise see. Both their outer, objective world and their inner, subjective being, as they now appeared, resembled each other within and resembled each other without. They were beyond 'I', beyond 'other'—this is just two 'persons' looking at each other, two 'persons' being alike. The one who is 'other' also speaks of himself as 'I', and your 'I' is also his 'other'.

In his statement "We are alike in both Mind and Eye," the Mind of the one was like the Mind of the other, and the Eye of the one was like the Eye of the other. The likeness was of Mind and Eye.[5] It is, for instance, as though Kayashata had said that both the Mind and the Eye of each of them were alike. What does it mean that the Mind of one is like the Mind of another? It is in the sense of the Third Ancestor and the Sixth Ancestor.[6] What does it mean that the Eye of one is like the Eye of another? It is in the sense of an Eye for the Way being hindered by one's eyes.

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5. That is, their understanding and view of things were the same.

6. Not only were the Third Ancestor and the Sixth Ancestor of like mind spiritually, their religious names were also connected. The former was called Kanchi, 'He Who is the Mirror's Wise Discernment', and the latter Daikan, 'He Who is the Great Mirror'.

Such is the import of what Kayashata was now enunciating. This was the fundamental means by which he first paid his respects to the Venerable Sōgyanandai. When you undertake to express what the import of this is, you should examine through your training the face of Buddhas and the face of Ancestors in your Great Round Mirror, for They are akin to the Ancient Mirror.

Once while the Thirty-third Ancestor, Meditation Master Daikan Enō, was training hard in doing seated meditation in the monastery on Mount Ōbai, he composed a poem for his Master, Daiman Kōnin, which he wrote on the wall:

Enlightenment really has no tree it abides in,
Nor is the Clear Mirror a mirrored dressing-stand.
From the first not a single thing exists,
So from where is dust or dirt to arise? [7]

We need to explore what this is saying. People in his generation called Great Ancestor Enō the Old Buddha. Meditation Master Engo said, "The Old Buddha Daikan Enō is the one I bow to in deepest respect." Thus, you need to recognize that Great Ancestor Daikan Enō displayed the Clear Mirror through his saying, "From the first not a single thing exists, so from where is dust or dirt to arise?"

"Nor is the Clear Mirror a mirrored dressing-stand." This statement contains the very lifeblood that we should strive hard to comprehend. All that is clear and bright is the Clear Mirror; thus it is said, "When a bright-headed one comes, a bright-headed one responds in kind." Because It is beyond being any 'where', there is no 'where' for It to be in. What is more, can there possibly be a single dust mote anywhere in the universe that is not in the Mirror? Can there possibly be a single dust mote on the Mirror that is not of the Mirror? Keep in mind that the whole universe is beyond being merely 'lands as numerous as dust motes'. As a consequence, the universe is the face of the Ancient Mirror.

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7. The allusions in this poem are to another poem written by Daiman Kōnin's chief disciple, whom monks at the monastery thought would be Kōnin's Dharma heir:

Our body is a bodhi tree,
Our mind like a dressing-stand with its clear mirror;
Time upon time let us strive to wipe it clean
And let not dust or dirt abide thereon.

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A monk once asked Meditation Master Nangaku Ejō, "Just as with a mirror that has been melted down and recast into a religious statue, where does a monk's previous brightness go to?"[8]

The Master replied, "Reverend monk, after you left home to become a monk, where did your various facial expressions go off to?"

The monk responded, "After someone has fully realized the Truth, why does he not shine like a mirror?"

The Master said, "Although he may not shine like a mirror, he cannot in the least deceive anyone as to what he has realized."

If you are not clear about what these myriad images now before us are, you would do well to inquire into the matter. Should you do so, you have the words of the Master about realizing the brightness that has already been cast into the Mirror. The Mirror is not of gold or of jewels, and It is not Its brightness or Its images, yet no sooner is Its form cast than the Mirror is, beyond doubt, completely clear.

"Where does a monk's previous brightness go to?" is a way of saying that it is a form like that of a recast mirror in the monk's remark, "It is like a mirror that has been melted down and recast into a religious statue." In other words, images go back to the place of images, and casting can make a mirror.

Asking where the facial features of the reverend monk went off to after he left home to become a monk was the Master's holding up of the Mirror and letting his Face shine. Right now, from among all the faces, which is your own True Face?

When the Master said, "Although he may not shine like a mirror, he cannot in the least deceive anyone as to what he has realized," he meant that he cannot force the Mirror to shine and that he cannot deceive others about Its shining. You need to inquire into the saying that, even were the ocean to dry up, it would not reach the state where its bed is completely exposed. Do not attempt to shatter It; do not let yourself be agitated by It. Even so, you need to inquire into the principle of 'picking out images and casting mirrors'. At this very moment, within the hundreds of myriad shining facets of the Mirror, one may be deceived by bit after bit.

8. That is, someone whilst still in lay life may exhibit a spontaneous brightness which dissolves after the person begins to train as a monk, as was the case with Kayashata. The monk's question, however, implies a distinction between 'us monks' and 'those lay people'.

❀

Great Master Seppō Shinkaku once told his assembly, "If you want to understand this matter, our here-and-now existence is just like one face of the Ancient Mirror. When a foreigner comes, a foreigner appears in It; when a Han comes, a Han appears in It."

Gensha Shibi then came forth and asked, "How about when you suddenly encounter a Clear Mirror coming towards you?"

The Master replied, "Both foreigner and Han disappear."

Shibi commented, "It is not that way with this one."

Seppō asked, "How is it with you?"

Shibi replied, "Please put my question to me, Reverend Monk."

Seppō said, "How about when you suddenly encounter a Clear Mirror coming towards you?"

Shibi answered, "It is shattered into hundreds of pieces!"

'This matter' of which Seppō is speaking in the present instance should be examined through your training and practice as 'this matter of the What'.[9] Let's begin by looking at and investigating Seppō's 'Ancient Mirror'. In his saying that our here-and-now existence is just like one face of the Ancient Mirror, 'one face' means that boundaries have long been eliminated and that 'within and without' have also been passed beyond; it is our being as a pearl rolling about on a flat board.

Now, "When a foreigner comes, a foreigner appears in It" is an allusion to one of the red beards.[10] As to "When a Han comes, a Han appears in It," although the Han have been so called since primeval times—that is, after the time of P'an-ku, when they first showed up in a physical form[11]—the 'Han' of which Seppō is now speaking is the Han who appears through the functioning of the Ancient Mirror.

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9. Buddha Nature is sometimes referred to in Chinese Zen texts as 'the What'. It is called this because all specific names tend to limit That Which is Beyond All Limits to something that the intellect can handle.

10. All those who are not of Han descent have long been considered by the Chinese to be foreigners and red-bearded barbarians, regardless of their actual physical appearance or how long they or their ancestors have lived in China.

11. P'an-ku is the Chinese legendary 'first human', born from primordial chaos. Upon his death, other humans came into being, and were considered to be either Chinese (Han) or barbarians.

Since 'Han' in the present instance does not refer to the Han people, he speaks of 'the Han coming'. One might add to Seppō's statement, "Both foreigner and Han disappear," that the Mirror also disappears from one's sight. Although Shibi's statement, "It is shattered into hundreds of pieces," is the very way it should be put, what he meant was, "When I previously asked you to hand me back a concrete fragment, why did you give me your Clear Mirror?"

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In the time of the Yellow Emperor,[12] there were twelve mirrors. A traditional explanation is that Heaven bestowed them on him. It is also said that they were given to him by the Taoist hermit Kuang-cheng-tsu on Mount Kung-tung. The procedure for using these twelve mirrors was that one was used for each of the twelve two-hour periods of a day. Also, one was used for each of the twelve months of every year, and they were used, one after the other, for each year in a twelve-year cycle. It is said that the mirrors were Kuang-cheng-tsu's scriptural texts.[13] In bestowing these texts on the Yellow Emperor, the twelve two-hour periods and so forth became mirrors. In this way, they illumined the past and illumined the present. If the twelve two-hour periods of a day were not mirrors, how could they possibly illumine the past? If the twelve periods were not mirrors, how could they possibly illumine the present? 'The twelve two-hour periods' are twelve surfaces; the twelve surfaces are twelve mirrors. What is called 'past and present' are reflected by the twelve time periods, and they display this principle. Although this is a mundane explanation, the Han appears within the twelve periods of each day.

> The Yellow Emperor Hsien-yüan climbed Mount Kung-tung on his hands and knees to ask Kuang-cheng-tsu about the Tao. At the time Kuang-cheng-tsu said, "Mirrors are the source of yin and yang; they are ever what regulate the body. By nature, there are three kinds of mirror: one called 'the Mirror of Heaven', one called 'the Mirror of Earth', and one called 'the Human Mirror'. These 'mirrors' are invisible and inaudible. When you become calm by being self-possessed, your body will naturally be upright. Beyond question, they will quiet you and purify you, so that nothing will trouble your body

12. The legendary third emperor of China.

13. That is, they were not actual mirrors but writings that the Emperor could look into in order to help him see how to handle various aspects of ruling.

> and nothing will perturb your spirit. Thus, you will be able to live a long life."

In the distant past, emperors used these three mirrors to govern the people and attend to the Greater Path. Someone who was clear about this Greater Path was considered Lord of Heaven and Earth. A secular work says, "The T'ang dynasty Emperor T'ai-tsung regarded people as mirrors, whereby he illumined and comprehended situations, so that he might defuse what was dangerous and regulate what was disorderly." He was using one of the three mirrors. Hearing that he treated people as mirrors, you may think that, by his consulting highly literate persons about matters past and present, he was able to know how and when to make use of wise and sage ones, as, for example, in his procuring the services of ministers like Wu-cheng and Fang-hsüan-ling. To understand the situation in this manner is far from the principle enunciated by the statement "T'ai-sung regarded people as mirrors." 'To regard people as mirrors' means to regard a mirror as a mirror, to regard oneself as a mirror, to regard the five elements as a mirror,[14] and to regard each of the five Confucian virtues of justice, politeness, wisdom, fidelity, and benevolence as a mirror. The principle of the Human Mirror is used in looking at the comings and goings of human beings, and is said to be, "Of their coming, there is no trace; of their departing, there is no quarter to which they go." This principle encompasses all the myriad thoughts and deeds of the clever and the inept: it is like the ever-changing conditions in the sky. Truly, it is the very woof and warp of things. It is the face of humans and the face of the Mirror, the face of the sun and the face of the moon. The vitality of the five peaks and the vitality of the four long rivers have cleansed the four seas for ever so long, for this is the custom of mirrors.[15] To be clear about human beings and to evaluate the woof and warp of things is said to be T'ai-sung's way. And it did not merely consist of consulting persons of learning.

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> Ever since the Age of the Divine Beings, Japan has had three mirrors which, along with the sacred jewels and the sacred sword, have been passed on up to the present day. One mirror is in the Great Shrine at Ise, one is in the Hinokuma Shrine in Kinokuni, and one is in the Imperial Sanctuary of the Emperor's Palace.

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14. The five elements are earth, water, fire, wind and space.

15. The five peaks are Mount Heng in the north, Mount Ho in the south, Mount Tai in the east, Mount Hua in the west, and Mount Sung in the center. The four rivers are the Yangtze, the Yellow, the Huai, and the Chi.

It is clear that all nations pass down and preserve a mirror. Those who possess the mirror possess the country. We have inherited what people have passed on to us, namely, that these three mirrors have been handed down along with the Imperial Divine Throne, and that they were introduced by the Heavenly Deity Amaterasu-Ōmikami. Even so, their finely tempered copper is also something wrought from materials partaking of yin and yang.[16] When the present comes, the present may well appear in them; when the past comes, the past may well appear in them. The mirror that illumines and commands a view of past and present, this will be the Ancient Mirror.

❀

The principle that Seppō recounted earlier can also be stated as, "When a Korean comes, a Korean appears in It; when a Japanese comes, a Japanese appears in It," and as, "When a lofty being comes, a lofty being appears in It; when an ordinary person comes, an ordinary person appears in It." Through our training and practice, we explore the matter of their coming and appearing in this manner, but even so, it is beyond us to know, at present, the cause of these appearances; it is simply a matter of their coming into view. Undoubtedly, you are not to explore comings and appearances as something to be known about, something to be comprehended. Is the principle that is now being expressed saying that the foreigner who comes is the foreigner who appears? The coming of a foreigner will be one instance of a foreigner coming, and the appearing of a foreigner will be one instance of a foreigner appearing. And yet, such a one does not come for the sake of appearing. This is what you should have for your investigation, even though the Ancient Mirror may be for you the Ancient Mirror.

When Shibi came forth and asked, "How about when you suddenly encounter a Clear Mirror coming towards you?" what he was saying is something that we need to inquire into and clarify. How much weight should we give to the term 'clear' that he is using at present? We might put it this way, "In that its coming is not necessarily that of a foreigner or of a Han, it is a Clear Mirror; further, it need not manifest before our very eyes as either a foreigner or a Han." The coming of the Clear Mirror is simply the coming of the Clear Mirror, and it is not a matter of there being two Mirrors, one Clear and one Ancient. Although there are not two Mirrors, 'the Ancient Mirror' refers to the Ancient Mirror, and 'the Clear Mirror' refers to the Clear Mirror. Directly experiencing that there is the Ancient Mirror and that there is the Clear Mirror is what Seppō and Shibi were

16. That is, despite their legendary origin, these sacred shrine mirrors are physical objects, unlike the Ancient Mirror that Dōgen has been discussing.

expressing through words. According to the Buddha's Way, we should consider these mirrors respectively as the True Nature and how the True Nature manifests. Shibi's speaking of a Clear Mirror coming should be understood as being totally penetrating and as clear as a bell. In meeting someone, he would probably display It forthwith; by the directness of his displaying It, he would probably have a positive influence on the person. So, are the 'clear' of the Clear Mirror and the 'ancient' of the Ancient Mirror the same, or are they different? Does the Clear Mirror have the nature of being ancient or not? Does the Ancient Mirror have the nature of being clear or not? Do not understand from the words 'the Ancient Mirror' that It must be clear. The main point is that the principle of "I too am like this, you too are like this, and all the Indian Ancestors are also like this" should be quickly cultivated. In the words of Shibi's disciple, Ancestral Master Kinkazan Kōtō, "The Ancient Mirror is polished." Might it also be so for the Clear Mirror? We should by all means have as our investigation through training and practice an exploration that broadly spans the sayings of all the Buddhas and Ancestors.

Seppō's statement, "Both the foreigner and the Han disappear," means that foreigner and Han will both disappear the moment that the Clear Mirror has appeared. What is the meaning of this principle of 'both disappearing'? Since the foreigner's and the Han's having already come and appeared does not get in the way of the Ancient Mirror, why should they both disappear now? Even though, from the perspective of the Ancient Mirror, "When a foreigner comes, a foreigner appears in It; when a Han comes, a Han appears in It," from the perspective of the Clear Mirror, the foreigner and the Han that appeared in the Ancient Mirror both disappear because of the natural coming of the Clear Mirror. Thus Seppō's statement also implies that the Ancient Mirror has Its face and the Clear Mirror has Its. You definitely need to be clear about the principle that when the Clear Mirror duly comes, It will not impede either the foreigner or the Han that appeared in the Ancient Mirror. The function of the Ancient Mirror about which we are now speaking, such that "When a foreigner comes, a foreigner appears in It; when a Han comes, a Han appears in It," is not saying that they come and appear upon the Ancient Mirror, or within the Ancient Mirror, or apart from the Ancient Mirror, or along with the Ancient Mirror. We need to listen carefully to what is being said here. At the time of the foreigner and the Han coming and appearing, the Ancient Mirror is causing foreigner and Han to appear. If you were to say, "At the time when both foreigner and Han disappear, the Mirror will continue to remain there," you would be in the dark about 'appearing' and would not be paying attention to 'coming'. Even calling you confused would not reach the mark.

Shibi commented, "It is not that way with me."
Seppō asked, "How is it with you?"
Shibi replied, "Please put my question to me, Reverend Monk."

Do not idly stumble past the words, "Please put my question to me," which Shibi is now uttering. Were there not full and sweet accord between 'parent' and 'child', how could the coming forth of the reverend monk's question and the request for the reverend monk to ask the question in turn take the form they did? At the time when Shibi was saying, "Please put my question to me, Reverend Monk," he would surely have been 'such a person'* and thus would have already reached the place from which his Master's question arose. When there is a thundering forth from the place of the question, there is no time to escape from it.

Seppō asked, "How about when you suddenly encounter a Clear Mirror coming towards you?"

The place of this question is the one Ancient Mirror which both 'parent' and 'child'—that is, Master and disciple—are mastering together.

Shibi replied, "It is shattered into hundreds of pieces!"

This statement shatters It into hundreds of myriad bits. "When you suddenly encounter a Clear Mirror coming towards you" is equivalent to Its being shattered into hundreds of pieces. That which experiences being shattered into hundreds of pieces is the Clear Mirror, because when you give expression to the Clear Mirror, It is shattered into hundreds of pieces. What the shattered pieces are dependent on is the Clear Mirror. Do not take the narrow view that there was an earlier time when It was not yet shattered and there will be a later time when It will no longer be shattered. It is, simply, shattered into hundreds of pieces. When someone comes face-to-face with any of these hundreds of fragments, it will be with just one isolated fragment. Despite this, do you describe the hundreds of shattered pieces that we are speaking of now as the Ancient Mirror or do you describe them as the Clear Mirror? You should ask again for a single word of clarification to turn things around for you. At the same time, such a word will be beyond your describing these pieces as the Ancient Mirror, and beyond your describing them as the Clear Mirror. Even though Shibi was able to bring forth the question about the Ancient Mirror and the Clear Mirror, when we discuss his way of putting the Matter,* might it be that the words which come to the tip of our tongue to describe that which manifests before our very eyes simply as 'walls and fences with their stones and tiles'* probably was, for him, 'hundreds of shattered pieces'?

And what form do the shatterings take? Myriad deep pools the color of antique jade, with the moon in the realm of unbounded space.

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> While Great Master Seppō Shinkaku and Meditation Master Sanshō Enen were traveling together, they saw a group of red-faced apes, whereupon Seppō said, "Each of these red-faced apes is carrying the Ancient Mirror upon its back."

We need to consider these words of his very carefully. The term 'red-faced apes' customarily refers to a particular type of monkey. The red-faced apes that Seppō saw, of what sort would they have been? You need to inquire in this manner, and make further diligent effort to understand. Pay no attention to how long it takes.

His words "Each of them is carrying the Ancient Mirror upon its back" mean that, even though the Ancient Mirror is the face of all the Buddhas and Ancestors, the Ancient Mirror is the Ancient Mirror, even from Their higher perspective. His saying that all the red-faced apes were carrying mirrors on their backs means that there were no larger or smaller mirrors, but that each was the one Ancient Mirror. The phrase 'carrying on their backs' means 'being backed by' in the sense, for instance, of the backing material used behind pictures and statues of the Buddha. When the backs of the red-faced apes are backed, they are backed by the Ancient Mirror. "What kind of glue have they come to use?" you may ask. To try to put it into words, "The back of the apes is backed by the Ancient Mirror. But is the back of the Ancient Mirror backed by red-faced apes? It is we who back the back of the Ancient Mirror with an Ancient Mirror. It is we who back the back of the ape with an ape." The phrase 'one mirror for each back' will not be an empty teaching, for it is a statement that fully expresses the Truth.

So, which is it, red-faced ape or Ancient Mirror? Ultimately, how should we put it? Are we just red-faced apes? Are we not red-faced apes? To whom are we to put the question? Whether we are red-faced apes is beyond our own knowledge and beyond the knowledge of others. Whether we are ourselves is beyond our ability to discover.

> Enen replied, "For eons beyond measure, It has been nameless, so why are you expressing It as 'the Ancient Mirror'?

This is one aspect, one facet, whereby Enen certified his realization of the Ancient Mirror. His phrase 'for eons beyond measure' means 'before any single moment of consciousness, any single thought, has sprouted up'; it means 'within any span of time, nothing has exposed its head'. His term 'nameless' means 'the face of the Sun, the face of the Moon, and the face of the Ancient Mirror for eons beyond

measure'. If the Nameless were not truly nameless, the eons beyond measure would not yet be for eons beyond measure. If the eons beyond measure were not entirely eons beyond measure, Enen's expression could not express It. Even so, the phrase 'before any single thought has sprouted up' means 'today'. So, cultivate yourself, without letting yourself stumble past today. Truly, the fame of this epithet 'nameless for eons beyond measure' has been heard on high.

And what do I call the Ancient Mirror? The Head of the Dragon, the Tail of the Snake!

At this time, Seppō might have turned to Enen and said, "The Ancient Mirror! The Ancient Mirror!" but that is not how he replied.

Seppō responded, "A flaw has emerged!"

What he meant by this was that a scratch has appeared. We may think, "How could a flaw have possibly been produced in the Ancient Mirror?" but the Ancient Mirror's yielding a flaw must mean that Enen's saying "It is nameless for eons beyond measure" is indeed a scratch. 'The Ancient Mirror's yielding a flaw' refers to the whole Ancient Mirror. Enen had not yet emerged from the dark realm of "Oh, the Ancient Mirror has produced a flaw!" so the understanding that he expressed through his words was neither more nor less than a flaw in the Ancient Mirror. Thus, we examine through our training and practice that flaws appear even in the Ancient Mirror, and that even those things from which flaws are produced are also the Ancient Mirror; this is our learning through our practice what the Ancient Mirror is.

Enen responded, "What has such deadly urgency? Besides, I don't even know what the topic of our conversation is."

The main point of what he said is "What is so deadly urgent?" You need to apply yourself unremittingly and investigate through your training and practice whether 'deadly urgency' refers to today or to tomorrow, to oneself or to others, to the whole universe or to some place within the land of Great T'ang China. As to the topic alluded to in the phrase 'not even knowing what the topic of our conversation is', there is the topic that is being expressed, the topic that has not yet been expressed, and the topic that has already been completely expressed. The principle of these topics is ever manifest before our very eyes. For instance, the topic is also one's realizing the Truth simultaneously with the great earth and all its sentient beings. It is beyond being 'mended brocade'. [17] This is why it is 'not

17. Being beyond 'mended brocade' is a metaphor for the Truth being seamless, as It is not something composed of bits and pieces of this and that sewn together.

known'. It is 'the one who faced His Imperial Majesty and said that he did not personally know That One'.[18] It is our not knowing That which is right before our face. It is not that the Topic does not exist, it is simply that It is beyond our knowing. His 'not knowing It' is a manifestation of his sincerity; it is also his not seeing his own brightness and clarity.

Seppō said, "The old monk has made a blunder."

This turn of phrase is usually said with the meaning of "I have put it badly," but it need not have this intent. 'The old monk' refers to the Old One who is Lord of the House. Do not undertake to study other matters; just examine 'the Old Monk' through your training. Though He has a thousand changes and ten thousand transformations, be they the face of a god or the countenance of a demon, what you examine is the Old Monk's 'just one move at a time'. And though He comes as a Buddha or comes as an Ancestor, be it for a single moment or for all of time, what you examine is the Old Monk's 'just one move at a time'. 'Making a blunder' refers to the One who is Master of the Temple having lots to do. When you think about it, Seppō was an outstanding disciple of Tokusan, and Enen was a wondrous supporter of Rinzai. Neither of these two venerable veterans sprang from humble lineage: the former was a distant descendant of Seigen, the latter was in the long line from Nangaku. How they came to reside in, and keep to, the Ancient Mirror is as given above. They should be paragons for trainees in later ages.

❀

Seppō, in addressing his assembly, once said, "When the width of the world is ten feet, the width of the Ancient Mirror will be ten feet; when the width of the world is one foot, the width of the Ancient Mirror will be one foot."

At that time Shibi pointed to the hearth and said, "Can you tell us just how wide our charcoal burner is?" [19]

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18. An allusion to Bodhidharma's interview with Emperor Wu of Liang. When the emperor asked him who it was that was facing His Imperial Majesty, Bodhidharma replied, "I do not personally know that one," because he was already rid of any false, socially conventional sense of a self.

19. On a literal level, the charcoal burner is a cauldron-shaped brazier around which monks customarily sat to warm themselves. It was also sometimes used in preparing such foods as rice and dumplings. The term is also sometimes used to refer to the hara, i.e., the belly, as the furnace for heating up our training, so that we are able to dissolve the ice-like hardness of our egoistic desires and to make palpable what spiritually sustains us.

> Seppō replied, "It resembles the width of the Ancient Mirror."
>
> Shibi responded, "The venerable Han has not let even a heel touch the ground!"

If we say that the width of our world is ten feet, our world will be ten feet wide; if we treat the width of our world as one foot, our world will be one foot wide. Moreover, the 'ten feet' we are speaking of now and the 'one foot' we are speaking of now are not some arbitrary linear measurements in feet. In examining this dialogue, people customarily speak of the width of the world as being 'the three-thousand great-thousandfold worlds, immeasurable and boundless' or as being 'the world of inexhaustible thoughts and things', but this is like our own self of small measure pointing to other villages in our vicinity. When worlds like these are proposed, they measure 'ten feet'. This is why Seppō said, "When the width of the Ancient Mirror is ten feet, the width of the world is ten feet." In examining this 'ten feet', you will catch a glimpse of one part of 'the width of the world'.

Further, in hearing the term 'the Ancient Mirror', one may envisage a sheet of thin ice, but It is not so. Although Its width of ten feet is at one with the width of the world being ten feet, does It necessarily stand shoulder-to-shoulder in form and likeness with the limitlessness of the world? Or are the Ancient Mirror and the world's limitlessness like fellow trainees, side by side? You should make a diligent effort to consider what this is saying.

What is more, the Ancient Mirror is not like a single pearl. Do not view It as being bright or dark; do not visualize It as being square or round. Even though the whole universe in all ten directions is the One Bright Pearl, this is not to be equated with the Ancient Mirror. Accordingly, the Ancient Mirror does not depend on the comings and appearances of foreigners or Han, for It is every single thing's being as unobstructed as a bell's clear resounding in all directions. It is beyond being many, beyond being large.

'Width' refers to Its measurements, and the term goes beyond what is meant by 'broad' or 'narrow'. That latter use of 'width' is like conventionally speaking of 'two inches' or 'three inches', or counting 'seven things' or 'eight things'. In the Buddhist way of counting, we use the term 'two ounces' to describe those who have had a great awakening and 'three ounces' to describe those who have gone beyond having awakened.[20] In counting Buddhas and Ancestors, we express the matter as their being of the 'fifth generation' or 'tenth generation' from

20. To paraphrase, those who have had a great awakening have realized a bit of the Truth; those who have gone beyond having awakened have realized a bit more of the Truth.

Shakyamuni Buddha. Ten feet is the width of the Ancient Mirror; the width of the Ancient Mirror is one span.

Shibi's asking about the width of the charcoal burner is an expression that is out in the open; you should explore it till you are a thousand or ten thousand years old. In looking at the charcoal burner now, from what perspective do we view it? When we look at the charcoal burner, it is not something that is 'seven feet' or 'eight feet'. This question of his was not posed during the time when he was still wavering and attached. It was his way of displaying, from his new perspective, what is meant by the statement, "What is It that comes like this?" When he came out with the words 'how wide', the 'how' that he had employed up to that time to refer to quantity is not his current 'how'. We should have no doubts about the fact that he had already realized liberation at that time. We should listen to Shibi's words as to the fundamental point that our 'charcoal burner' is beyond form and measure. Do not idly let the dumpling that is now right before you fall on the ground! Tear it open! This is what diligent effort is!

We need to reflect on and illumine Seppō's statement, "It is like the width of the Ancient Mirror." He put it this way because the situation was beyond the point where he could state that the width of the charcoal burner was ten feet. It is not the case that his answering 'ten feet' would have expressed the situation more accurately than his saying 'like the width of the Ancient Mirror'. We need to consider the daily activities of 'being like the width of the Ancient Mirror'. Many people consider his omitting to say that the width of the charcoal burner is ten feet to be an inaccuracy in his expressing the Matter. Such folks need to consider the freedom of his 'width', to reflect on the undiluted nature of the Ancient Mirror, and to not stumble past the day-to-day operating of That Which is Real. In the words of Meditation Master Kyōgen Chikan, they need to advance along the ancient path with a smiling countenance, without lapsing into periods of despondency.

The intent behind Shibi's response, "The venerable Han has not let even a heel touch the ground!" is that whether he said 'venerable Han' or 'venerable monk', it is certainly not 'Seppō', since Seppō must surely be 'a Venerable Han'.[21] You also need to ask in what place his heel is; you need to investigate thoroughly what 'heel' means. What I mean by 'investigating thoroughly' is asking yourself, "Is 'heel' an allusion to the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, or to

21. The term 'venerable Han', like 'venerable monk', would have been understood conventionally as a polite expression for 'you'. In Zen, 'Venerable Han' was also used to refer to someone who had dropped off the false self, to a Buddha, to 'such a one'. Seppō, having already awakened, was no longer 'Seppō' in a conventional sense, but was 'such a one'.

unbounded space, or to the whole of the great earth, or to the clear and bright life stream of the Buddhas and Ancestors?" And you need to be diligent in your exploration of just how many heels could be involved: is it just one heel, or half a heel, or hundreds of thousands of myriad heels?

In his phrase 'not yet touched the ground', what sort of thing is this 'ground' he is talking about? The ground that we nowadays refer to as the great earth, some provisionally call 'the ground' in conformity with one way of looking at things. Again, among these various ways, there are some that see 'the ground' as the mind-boggling Dharma Gate to liberation, and some that see it as what all Buddhas do and say. So, what sort of thing is this 'ground' that one should touch one's heel down upon? Is this 'ground' our real being? Or is it beyond our real being? Further, in sum, can even the tiniest bit of that which we call 'the ground' not exist within the Great Way? Let the question arise, let the question pass; talk about it with others, talk about it with yourself. Is the heel touching the ground the way it should be, or is the heel not touching the ground the way it should be? Since "Why?" is the question, why did Shibi state that not even a heel had touched the ground? When there is not the tiniest bit of ground on the Great Earth, then, of necessity, neither 'touching the ground' nor 'not yet touching the ground' will come about. Thus, "The venerable Han has not let even a heel touch the ground!" is the Venerable Han's very breathing in and breathing out, the very functioning of His heels.

❀

Meditation Master Kinkazan Kōtō of Kokutai-in Temple in the Wu-chou district was once asked by one of his monks, "What is the Ancient Mirror before It has been polished?"

The Master answered, "The Ancient Mirror."

The monk then asked, "What is It after It has been polished?"

The Master answered, "The Ancient Mirror."

You need to recognize that even though there is a time when the Ancient Mirror, as now spoken of, is being polished, a time when It has not yet been polished, and a time after It has been polished, It is one and the same Ancient Mirror. Thus, when we are polishing It, the Ancient Mirror polishes the whole Ancient Mirror. We do not polish It by adding something that is not the Ancient Mirror, such as quicksilver. This is neither ourselves polishing ourselves nor the self doing the polishing, but our polishing the Ancient Mirror. Before we have polished ourselves, the Ancient Mirror is not dull. Even though some may describe It as being black, It will never be dull, for It is the living Ancient Mirror. Generally speaking, in polishing a mirror, we may make it into a mirror, and in polishing a

roof tile, we may make it into a mirror, and in polishing a tile, we may make it into a tile, and in polishing a mirror, we may make it into a tile. There are times when we polish something and make nothing, and there are times when we can make something, even though we are not able to polish it. The traditional activities of the Buddhas and Ancestors are all the same as this.

❀

A long time ago, when Baso of Kiangsi Province was training under Nangaku, Nangaku on one occasion privately imparted the Mind seal* to him. This occurred just before the incident concerning the polishing of the roof tile. While staying in Chuan-fa Temple, Baso had been doing seated meditation day in and day out for some ten years or more. We can imagine what his thatched hut was like on a rainy night, and it is said that he never abandoned its freezing floor even when it was enveloped in snow.

> One day when Nangaku came to Baso's hut, Baso stood up to receive him. Nangaku asked him, "What have you been doing recently?"
>
> Baso replied, "Recently I have been doing the practice of seated meditation exclusively."
>
> Nangaku asked, "And what is the aim of your seated meditation?"
>
> Baso replied, "The aim of my seated meditation is to achieve Buddhahood." [22]
>
> Thereupon, Nangaku took a roof tile and began rubbing it on a rock near Baso's hut.
>
> Baso, upon seeing this, asked him, "Reverend monk, what are you doing?"
>
> Nangaku replied, "I am polishing a roof tile."
>
> Baso then asked, "What are you going to make by polishing a roof tile?"

22. The translation may not clearly convey the contradiction in Baso's statement. The particular practice of seated meditation he specifically mentions is *chih-kuan ta-tsuo* (J. *shikan taza*), a Chinese colloquial phrase that literally translates as 'just control yourself and sit there'. This implies sitting in meditation without deliberately thinking of anything, or holding on to anything that naturally arises, or pushing away anything that naturally arises, and without trying to suppress any thoughts from arising. However, in reply to Nangaku's question, Baso indicates that, in fact, he has something he is deliberately holding in his mind, namely, the goal of realizing Buddhahood, literally 'making himself into a Buddha'.

Nangaku replied, "I am polishing it to make a mirror."

Baso said, "How can you possibly make a mirror by rubbing a tile?"

Nangaku replied, "How can you possibly make yourself into a Buddha by doing seated meditation?"

For hundreds of years now, many people have held the view that, in this story, Nangaku is earnestly endeavoring to encourage Baso in his practice. This is not necessarily so, for, quite simply, the daily activities of the great saintly teacher were far removed from the realm of ordinary people. If great saintly teachers did not have the Dharma of polishing a tile, how could they possibly have the skillful means to guide people? Having the strength to guide people is the Bones and Marrow of an Ancestor of the Buddha. Even though the tile was the thing that came to hand, still, it was just an everyday, household object.[23] If it were not an everyday object or some household utensil, then it would not have been passed on by the Buddha's family. What is more, its impact on Baso was immediate. Be very clear about it, the functioning of the True Transmission of Buddhas and Ancestors involves a direct pointing. We should truly comprehend that when the polished tile became a mirror, Baso became Buddha. And when Baso became Buddha, Baso immediately became the real Baso. And when Baso became the real Baso, his sitting in meditation immediately became real seated meditation. This is why the saying 'polishing a tile to make a mirror' has been preserved in the Bones and Marrow of former Buddhas.

Thus it is that the Ancient Mirror was made from a roof tile. Even though the mirror was being polished, it was already without blemish in its unpolished state. The tile was not something that was dirty; it was polished simply because it was a tile. On that occasion, the virtue of making a Mirror was made manifest, for it was the diligent effort of an Ancestor of the Buddha. If polishing a tile did not make a Mirror, then even polishing a mirror could not have made a Mirror. Who can surmise that in this act of making, there is the making of a Buddha and there is the making of a Mirror?

Further, some may wonder, "When the Ancient Mirror is polished, can It ever be polished into a tile?" Your state of being—your breathing in and breathing out—when you are engaged in polishing is not something that you can gauge at other times. And Nangaku's words, to be sure, express what is expressible. As a result, in the final analysis, he was able to polish a tile and make a Mirror. Even we

23. This is a reference to the common practice among Zen Masters of employing everyday objects to help their disciples realize the Truth.

people of the present time should try to pick up today's 'tile' and give it a polish, for ultimately it will become a Mirror. If a tile could not become a Mirror, people could not become Buddha. If we belittle tiles as being lumps of clay, we will also belittle people as being lumps of clay. If people have a Heart, then tiles too will have a Heart. Who can recognize that there is a Mirror in which, when a tile comes, the Tile appears? And who can recognize that there is a Mirror in which, when a mirror comes, the Mirror appears?

Delivered to the assembly at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month in the second year of the Ninji era (October 15, 1241).

Recopied in the Sandalwood Grove[24] *on the thirteenth day of the first month in the fourth year of the same era (February 3, 1243).*

24. The nickname for a Zen monastery in which the monks are doing outstanding training.

20

On Reading Scriptures

(Kankin)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse, Dōgen takes up both the literal and the non-literal meanings of 'reading Scriptures', as well as various forms of ceremonial involved with the reading of Scriptures in monastic life.

The training that we undertake to directly experience supreme, fully perfected enlightenment sometimes makes use of our good spiritual friends and sometimes makes use of *sutras*. 'Our good spiritual friends' refers to the Buddhas and Ancestors, those who have completely realized their True Self. *'Sutras'* is a technical term for Scriptural texts, which are spiritually complete in and of Themselves. Because Self Nature is what all Buddhas and Ancestors are and because Self Nature is what all Scriptures are, this is the way all things are. We speak of Their 'Self', but It is a Self that is beyond any adherence to 'self and other', for It is Their penetrating Eye, Their emancipating Fist.[1]

At the same time, there is the practice of calling the Scriptures to mind, of reading Them, chanting Them, copying Them, accepting Them, and preserving Them, which all together comprise the training to directly experience what the Buddhas and Ancestors experienced. Nonetheless, encountering the Buddha's Scriptures is no easy matter. As they say, "In countless lands, not even as much as Their names can be heard," and "Even among Buddhas and Ancestors, not even Their names can be heard," and "Within the lifeblood of our Ancestral line, not even Their names can be heard." When we are not a Buddha or an Ancestor, we do not see or hear the Scriptures, read or chant Them, or explain Their meaning. As soon as we have begun to investigate the Buddhas and Ancestors through our training, then, with some considerable difficulty, we begin to explore and train with Scriptural texts. At this time, what manifests before us are the hearing, keeping to, accepting, and expounding of the Scriptures that we experience within our ears, our eyes, our tongue, our nose, our body, our mind, no matter what place we go to, or

1. The eyes of Masters were commonly associated with seeing the essence of the Dharma, whereas the raising of a fist was often used by Masters to show that 'That Which Is' is beyond words or conceptual thought.

listen from, or speak at. Because those folks who expound non-Buddhist theories and interpretations are seeking a name for themselves, they cannot put the Buddha's true purpose into practice. That is why the Scriptures have been passed on and preserved on trees and on rocks, why They have spread through field and town, why They are presented to us by worlds of dust motes, and why They are opened up and lectured on by boundless space.

❀

> Great Master Igen, our ancient Ancestor of Yakusan Mountain, absented himself from the Dharma Hall for a long time. So the temple's Prior said to him, "Venerable Monk, the whole assembly has for ever so long looked forward to your compassionate instruction."
>
> Yakusan said, "Ring the summoning bell."
>
> The Prior rang the bell. The whole assembly had barely gathered together when Yakusan entered the hall. No sooner had he taken his seat, than he forthwith got up and returned to the Abbot's quarters. Following after him, the Prior said, "Venerable Monk, just a moment ago you promised to give voice to the Dharma for the sake of the assembly, so why have you not conferred a single word on us?"
>
> Yakusan replied, "The Scriptures have teachers of Scripture and the commentaries have teachers of commentary. So, how can you possibly have doubts about the old monk?"[2]

Whenever the Great Master gave compassionate instruction, the Fist had Its Fist teacher and the Eye had Its Eye teacher. Be that as it may, what the Prior should have respectfully put to the Great Master at that moment was, "It is not that I have had doubts arise about the Venerable Monk, but rather, I wonder what the Venerable Monk is a teacher of?"

❀

In the assembly of the lofty Ancestor Enō, founder of the monastery on Mount Sōkei in Shin-chou Province, a monk named Hōtatsu, who could recite the whole of the *Lotus Scripture* by heart, had come to train under the Master. The Founding Ancestor gave voice to the following poem for Hōtatsu's benefit:

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2. Yakusan's question has a double meaning: "What makes you doubt that your Abbot is doing his job?" and "Why do you doubt that Buddha Nature (The Old Monk) has Its teachers, just as the Scriptures and the commentaries have theirs?"

When the mind wanders onto deluded paths,
It is being set in motion by the flowering of the Dharma;
When the heart awakens,
The Dharma's flowering is set in motion.

However long you recite this Scripture, should it be while still unawakened to the Self that is true,
You will then create an enemy to Its meaning.
To read It without opinion's bonds is the proper way,
But read It bound to fixed ideas, and It becomes error's way.

When you cease to judge whether you are bound or not,
You ride forever long within the cart by the White Ox drawn.

Thus, the deluded mind is turned around by the Flowering of the Dharma, and the awakened mind sets the flowering of the Dharma in motion. And further, when we leap beyond 'deluded versus awakened', the Flowering of the Dharma sets the flowering of the Dharma in motion.

When Hōtatsu heard this poem, he leapt for joy and presented the following poem in praise of it:

The three thousand times that I have recited this Scripture
Have been surpassed by Enō's solitary verse.
Because I was not yet clear as to the purpose of my coming into this world,
How was I to halt the folly of my troubled life?

'Sheep', 'deer', and 'ox' provide but expedient means.
At beginning, middle, and end, they promote the virtuous and the good.
Who within the burning house know
That, from the first, they are lords within the Dharma?

The Founding Ancestor then said, "From now on, it would be good to refer to you as 'the Monk Who Calls the *Lotus Scripture* to Mind.'"

You should recognize that in the Buddha's Way there is the monk who calls the *Lotus Scripture* to mind. This is directly pointed to by Enō, our Old Buddha of Sōkei. The 'calling to mind' in this 'monk who calls the *Lotus Scripture* to mind' points to one who is beyond 'holding to opinions' and beyond 'being free of

opinions'. He is no longer involved in measuring by means of 'holding to' or 'being free'. This means, simply, that as the Founding Ancestor once said, "From eon to eon, we do not let this Scripture book out of our hands, and, both day and night, there is no time when we do not call this Scripture to mind." In other words, from Scripture to Scripture, there is no time when we are not This Scripture.

❀

> The Twenty-seventh Ancestor, the Venerable Hannyatara of eastern India, was once invited to dine with an eastern Indian king.[3] After the meal, the king asked her, "All the other monks have recited Scriptures to me, so why have you alone not recited them?"
>
> The Ancestor replied, "In my humble way, what I breathe out does not conform itself to external conditions and events, and what I breathe in does not take up residence in the realm of my skandhas.* The Scriptures that I recite are always like this. Thus they are comprised of hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of scrolls, not just one or two scrolls."

The Venerable Hannyatara was a seedling that sprouted up in a kingdom in eastern India. She was a direct descendant of the twenty-seventh generation from the Venerable Makakashyō. She had had properly Transmitted to her all the necessary equipment of the Buddha's family, having in her charge a monk's Head, Eye, Fist, Nose, traveling staff, alms bowl, robe, Dharma, Bones, and Marrow. She is our Founding Ancestor, and we are her distant descendants. What the Venerable One is now putting her full strength into saying is that not only does what she exhales not conform itself to external conditions, but external conditions do not conform themselves to what she exhales. Even though external conditions comprise her head and eyes, her whole body, and her whole heart and mind, her carrying them about when she comes, when she departs, and when she comes back again are simply her 'not conforming herself to external conditions'. 'Not conforming oneself' means going along with completely; thus, it means participating in the rough and tumble of daily life.[4] Even though her breathing out was an external condition, it was her not conforming herself to external conditions. Innumerable

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3. There is a long-standing Indian tradition which holds that Hannyatara was a female monk who was renowned for her extraordinary spiritual prowess.

* See *Glossary.*

4. That is, Buddhism is not a form of quietism or stoicism, nor is it the trainee's goal to become a doormat.

eons have come and gone, but people have not yet understood the ebb and flow of breathing in and breathing out. Be that as it may, the moment has come, right now, when you can understand it for the first time, so pay attention to 'not taking up residence in the realm of one's skandhas' and to 'not conforming oneself to external conditions'. This is the moment when external conditions, for the first time, permit the exploration of such things as 'breathing in'. This moment has never been before, and it may never be again: it is just now.

'The realm of the skandhas' refers to our five skandhas, namely, our physical form, our sensory perceptions, our mental conceptions, our volition, and our consciousness. The reason why she does not reside in these five skandhas is because she is in a realm that the five skandhas have not yet reached. Because she chose the right key to unlock this, the Scriptures that she recited were not merely one or two scrolls; they were hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of scrolls which she was continually reciting. Although 'hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of scrolls' gives us the general idea of 'many', it is not just some measurement of 'many'. Her 'not taking up residence in the realm of her skandhas' made her exhalation of a single breath equivalent to hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of scrolls. At the same time, this is not something which can be measured by discernment that is either tainted or untainted, nor is it to be found in the realm where thoughts and things are either tainted or untainted. As a consequence, it is beyond the measurements of what one having intelligence knows, beyond the conjectures of what one having knowledge discerns, beyond the considerations of what one lacking intelligence knows, and beyond the reach of what one who is ignorant discerns. It is what Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor trained to realize: it is Their Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow, Their Eye and Fist, Their Head and Nose, Their traveling staff* and ceremonial hossu,* Their leaping beyond and Their every little bit of behavior.

❀

Once when Great Master Jōshū was at Kannon-in Temple, there was an old woman who sent the Great Master an offering of monetary alms along with a request that he recite the whole of the *Tripitaka** for her.

> The Master came down from his meditation seat, circled once around it, and then turned to her messenger and said, "I have already finished reciting the *Tripitaka* for her."
>
> The messenger, upon his return, reported this to the old woman. The old woman said, "When I asked him the other day to recite all of

> the *Tripitaka* for me, why did the venerable monk read only half the Scriptures?"[5]

In speaking of reciting the whole *Tripitaka* or reciting just half of It, it is clear that, for the old woman, the Scriptures were simply 'three scrolls', whereas, for Jōshū, saying that he had already finished reciting the *Tripitaka* showed that his Scripture encompassed the whole of the *Tripitaka*. In sum, as to the plight of reciting the whole *Tripitaka*, there is Jōshū who is circling his meditation seat, there is his meditation seat which is encircling Jōshū, there is Jōshū who is circling Jōshū, and there is his meditation seat which is encircling his meditation seat. Be that as it may, his reciting the whole *Tripitaka* is not just his circling around his meditation seat, nor is it just his meditation seat doing the circling.

❀

Great Master Daizui Shinshō of Ekishū Province was an heir of Meditation Master Chōkei Daian. As in the previous narrative, there was once an old woman who sent the Master an offering of monetary alms along with a request for him to recite the whole of the *Tripitaka* for her.

> The Master came down from his meditation seat and circled it once, then, turning to her messenger, said to him, "I have already finished reciting the *Tripitaka* for her."
>
> The messenger, upon his return, reported this to the old woman. The old woman said, "When I asked him the other day to recite all of the *Tripitaka* for me, why did the venerable monk read only half the Scriptures?"

Now, do not focus your inquiry on Daizui's circling his meditation seat, or focus it on the meditation seat's encircling Daizui, as in the previous narrative. It is not just a matter of the perfect roundness of his Fist and Eye; it is his walking in a circle, which has made a circular form. But did the old woman have the Eye to see that, or was she not yet equipped with that Eye? For even though her remark, "He only recited half the *Tripitaka,*" correctly Transmitted what was being stated by Daizui's Fist, she should have said, "When I asked him the other day to recite the *Tripitaka* for me, why did the venerable monk only waste time fooling around?" Had she put the Matter* like this, even accidentally, she would have been an old woman who was equipped with the Eye.

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5. She is saying, in effect, "Why did he do only half the job?"

❀

There was once a government official who provided our Founding Ancestor, Great Master Tōzan Ryōkai, with an alms meal and a votive offering of monetary alms, asking the Master if he would read or recite the *Tripitaka* for his benefit.

> The Great Master got down from his meditation seat and, turning towards the official, silently nodded his head.[6]
>
> The official nodded his head to the Great Master.
>
> Leading the official, the Master took both of them around the meditation seat for one circling and then, turning to the official, he nodded his head. After a rather long time, he asked the official, "Did you understand?"
>
> The official answered, "No, I didn't understand."
>
> The Master said, "You and I have read and recited the whole of the *Tripitaka*, so why did you not understand?"

This "You and I have read and recited the whole of the *Tripitaka"* is clear enough. Do not consider their going around the meditation seat as their reading and reciting the *Tripitaka*; do not understand their reading and reciting the *Tripitaka* as their going around the meditation seat. Instead, we should listen to the compassionate instruction of our Founding Ancestor.

This incident was cited by my late Master, the Old Buddha, when he was residing on Mount Tendō. A Korean donor had presented him with a votive offering of monetary alms along with the request that the whole community recite a Scripture and that the Master give a Dharma talk from his meditation seat. Having finished recounting this story, my late Master drew a large circle in the air with his ceremonial hossu and said, "Today I, Tendō, along with you, have read and recited the whole of the *Tripitaka*." He then laid his hossu to one side and came down from his seat.

We should now study what my late Master said, without comparing it with the sayings of others. Still, in his reading and reciting the whole of the *Tripitaka*, did he use a whole Eye or only half of It? Did what our Founding Ancestor said and what my late Master said involve the use of their Eye or the use of their tongue? And to what extent did they come to use them? Do your utmost to <u>see</u>!

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6. Upon being offered alms by a lay person, a monk customarily performs monjin. That is, he makes a deep bow from the waist, with hands held in the prayer-like gasshō position. The nod spoken of here and later in the text refers to a slight nodding of the head, with the hands usually held in shashu. The head nod was used as a simple form of greeting or acknowledgment whilst in the Monks' Hall.

❀

Great Master Igen, our ancient Ancestor of Yakusan Mountain, was in the habit of not permitting his monks to read Scriptures. One day, when he himself was holding a Scripture in his hands and reading it, a monk asked him, "Venerable Monk, you are in the habit of not permitting us to read Scriptures, so why are you reading one?"

The Master replied, "I just want to shield my eyes."

The monk asked, "May I take a lesson from the Venerable Monk and do likewise?"

The Master replied, "If you were to read, it would surely be enough to pierce holes even through the hide of an ox."[7]

The phrase, "I wish to shield my eyes," is what the shielded Eye Itself utters. 'To shield one's Eye' means to forget all about 'eyes' and to forget all about 'Scriptures'; it means to shield our whole Eye and to shield It completely. It means to open the Eye while we are shielding It, to enliven our Eye within our shielding of It, to enliven our shielding of It within the Eye Itself, to add another eyelid to our eyelids, to make the most of our Eye within our shielding It, and to let the Eye Itself make the most of Its being shielded. Thus, if it is not a Scripture for the Eye, the function of shielding the Eye does not yet exist.

"You would surely pierce through the hide of an ox" refers to the hide of the Whole Ox, and to the whole hide of the Ox, and to making use of the Ox to make a hide. Thus we make hide, flesh, bones, and marrow, along with horns and nostrils, into the living measure of the Ox. When taking a lesson from the venerable monk, the Ox becomes the Eye—this is to be understood as 'shielding the Eye': it is the Eye becoming the Ox.

❀

Meditation Master Yafu Dōsen once said in verse:

You may well ask, "Boundless are the merits of offerings made
to the countless Buddhas,
But how can they possibly resemble the merits from continually
reading Their ancient instructions
Whose words are written in ink upon white paper?"
Well, open your eyes and look at what is right in front of you!

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7. In accord with Dōgen's later discussion, what the Master is actually saying is "If you were to truly read—that is, to read with the Eye of wise discernment—you would be able to penetrate the Scripture (the hide) and see Buddha Nature (the Ox) in it.

You need to recognize that the blessings and merit from making offerings to the ancient Buddhas and from reading Their ancient instructions stand shoulder-to-shoulder with each other, and even go beyond blessings and merit. What people call 'ancient instructions' are the inked words written on white paper, but who can understand these as Their Age-old Instruction? You need to train until you thoroughly understand this very principle.

❀

In the monastery of Great Master Ungo Dōyō there was once a monk who was in his quarters chanting a Scripture. The Great Master, from outside the window, asked him, "What Scripture is the acharya* reciting?"

The monk replied, "The *Vimalakirti** *Scripture*."

The Master said, "I am not asking you if it is the *Vimalakirti Scripture.* What you are reciting is a Scripture of What!"

Thereupon, this monk gained entry into the Truth.[8]

The Great Master's remark, "What you are reciting is a Scripture of What!" means that what is at the bottom of reciting a text is far beyond all time; it is not something one would want to describe as 'reciting'. The monk had met a poisonous snake along his path.[9] This is why the question of "What Scripture?" manifested before his very eyes. Having met 'such a person',* he could not give him a false answer. This is why he said, "The *Vimalakirti Scripture*."

Speaking generally, 'to read Scriptures' means that we collect together every single, solitary Ancestor of the Buddha and read a Scripture through their Eye. At this very moment, in a twinkling, the Ancestors of the Buddha become Buddhas, give voice to the Dharma, give voice to Buddha, and do what a Buddha does. If it is not an occasion for this kind of 'reading Scripture', the Head, Face, and Eye of the Buddha's Ancestors do not yet exist for you.

❀

In the assemblies of present-day Ancestors of the Buddha there are many varied procedures for the reading of Scriptures, such as when a donor comes to the

8. The Great Master's question and exclamation are translations of the same phrase in the original, but reflect how the monk interpreted them. The monk understood the latter statement as pointing him away from an intellectual understanding of Scripture to That which is the True Source of all Scriptures.

9. That is, the Master's statement pulled the monk up short, as if he were faced with a life-threatening situation.

monastery and asks the whole community to read a Scripture, or when the monks read a Scripture for someone's benefit on a regular basis, or when monks read them voluntarily, and so forth. Besides these, there is the reading of Scriptures by the whole community for the benefit of some deceased monk.

In the case of a donor coming to the monastery and asking the whole community to read a Scripture, at breakfast time on the appointed day, the Chief of the Monks' Hall hangs up 'Reading of Scriptures' signs in front of the Monks' Hall and at the various private quarters. After breakfast, a bowing mat is spread out before the Saintly Monk.[10] At the appropriate time, the bell before the Monks' Hall is rung either once or three times, in accordance with the instructions of the Abbot. At the sound of the bell, the Chief Junior and the whole community put on their kesas,* enter the Cloud Hall, go to their regular places, and sit facing outwards. Next, the Abbot enters the hall, makes monjin* to the Saintly Monk and, after offering incense, sits in his own place. The novices are then instructed to distribute copies of the Scripture. These Scriptures had been arranged in the proper order earlier in the Kitchen Hall so as to be ready for distribution at the proper time. The Scriptures are distributed from inside a Scripture box or put on a tray and distributed from there. Once the members of the community have asked for a copy the Scripture, they then open It and begin their reading of It.

At this time, the Guestmaster leads the donor into the Cloud Hall. The donor, having procured a hand-held censer just outside the Cloud Hall, holds it aloft and enters the hall. The hand-held censer is stored in the common area by the entrance to the kitchen. It has been filled with incense beforehand, and a temple helper is asked to bring it to the front of the Cloud Hall and give it to the donor when the latter prepares to enter the hall upon being summoned. The request for the hand-held censer is made by the Guestmaster. When entering the hall, the Guestmaster goes first, followed by the donor. They enter by the south side of the front entrance to the Cloud Hall. The donor goes up before the Saintly Monk, offers a pinch of incense, and makes three bows. He or she does these bows while holding on to the censer. During the bows, the Guestmaster stands to the north of the bowing mat, hands in shashu,* and faces south towards the donor. Once the donor has finished bowing, he or she turns to the right and, facing the Abbot, holds the censer aloft and, bending from the waist, makes a nodding motion with the head. The Abbot, still in his seat, holds the Scripture aloft with his hands in gasshō* in acknowledgment of the donor's nod. The donor then turns to the north and nods.

10. The Saintly Monk in the Monks' Hall usually alludes to the picture or statue of Manjushri, who represents spiritual wisdom, although in some Chinese monasteries the figure is of Hōtei, the Laughing Buddha.

Once the nodding is finished, the hall is circumambulated, starting from in front of the Chief Junior. During the circumambulating of the hall, the Guest Master goes first, leading the donor. Having done one round of circumambulating, they return in front of the Saintly Monk where the donor, facing the Saintly Monk, holds the censer aloft and does a nod. At this time, the Guestmaster, hands in shashu, stands just inside the entrance to the Cloud Hall, south of the bowing mat, facing northwards. Having finished the nodding to the Saintly Monk, the donor follows the Guestmaster out to the front of the Cloud Hall, where they circumambulate the area in front of the hall once, then reenter the Cloud Hall. Facing the Saintly Monk, the donor does three bows. When the bows are finished, the donor sits in a ceremonial folding chair and witnesses the reading of the Scripture. The folding chair is placed near the pillar left of the Saintly Monk and facing south. It may also be placed near the south pillar and facing north. When the donor has been seated, the Guestmaster should turn towards the donor and nod, and then take his own place. Alternatively, while the donor is circumambulating the hall, the Scripture may be chanted in Sanskrit. The seats for those who are chanting may be to the right of the Saintly Monk or to the left of the Saintly Monk, whichever is convenient.

Aloes or some other pure incense is inserted and burned in the censer. This incense is supplied by the donor.

While the donor is circumambulating the hall, the monks in the assembly hold their hands in gasshō.

Next, the monetary donation for the reading of Scriptures is distributed among the monks. The amount of the donation is at the discretion of the donor. Sometimes, objects like cotton cloth or fans are handed out. The donor himself may hand them out, or some temple officer or helper may do so.

The method for distributing these offerings is to place the donation in front of the monk, not to place it in the monk's hand. When a donation is placed before the assembled monks, each monk in turn acknowledges it with hands held in gasshō. Alternatively, donations may be distributed at that day's midday meal. When they are distributed at the midday meal, after the Chief Junior has made the offering of the donor's food, he strikes his clappers once more and distributes any other alms the donor may be offering.

The donor will have written out on paper the purpose for which he is dedicating the merit of his alms, and this paper will have been affixed on the pillar to the right of the Saintly Monk.

When we are reading a Scripture in the Cloud Hall, we do not read It with a loud voice, but with a low one. Sometimes we simply open the Scripture book and look at the words, reading the text with our eyes word by word, without reading It in phrases. For the reading of Scriptures at such a time, there are hundreds of thousands of copies stored for common use, such as copies of the *Scripture on the Diamond-like Wisdom*, the "Universal Gate" chapter and "The Conduct That Eases the Way" chapter from the *Lotus Scripture*, and the *Golden Light Scripture*. Each monk reads one scroll. When the reading of Scriptures is finished, the temple assistants pass in front of the seats, carrying the original tray or the Scripture box, and each monk in the assembly replaces the Scripture there. When taking and replacing Scriptures, we make gasshō. When we are taking a scroll, we make gasshō first and then take a scroll. When we are replacing a scroll, we first place it and then make gasshō. After this, each monk, with hands in gasshō, recites the Transfer of Merit verse in a low voice.

When there is a reading of Scriptures in a hall that is open to the general public, one of the managerial officers of the monastery offers incense, makes bows, circumambulates the hall, and distributes alms donations, all just as a donor would do. The hand-held censer is also held aloft in the same way that a donor would. If the donor who is requesting the assembly to do a reading is someone from within the monastic assembly, the procedure is the same as for a lay donor: there will be an incense offering, bows, a circumambulating of the hall, a distributing of donations, and so forth. The Guestmaster will lead this monk in the same way that he would lead a lay donor.

❀

It is customary to read Scriptures in celebration of the Imperial Birthday. If the Imperial Birthday is celebrated on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month, we begin reading the Scriptures on the fifteenth day of the twelfth lunar month. On that day there is no Abbatical lecture in the Monks' Hall. Two rows of meditation platforms are set up in front of the statue of Shakyamuni Buddha in the Buddha Hall. That is, the platforms are set out facing each other east and west, with each platform running from south to north. Special stands are set up in front of these platforms. On these stands we place the Scriptures—the *Scripture on the Diamond-like Wisdom*, the *Scripture on the Two Lords*, the *Lotus Scripture*, the *Scripture on the Supreme Lord*, the *Golden Light Scripture*, and the like. Each day, a few monks from among those in the Monks' Hall are invited to partake of refreshments well before the time of the midday meal. A bowl of noodles and a cup of hot soup are served to each monk. Or each may receive six or seven steamed dumplings and a serving of hot soup. The dumplings are served in their own bowl and are eaten with

chopsticks, not with a soupspoon. While eating, the monks partake of these refreshments in their sitting place for reading Scriptures; they do not sit anywhere else. The refreshments are arranged on the stand for holding the Scriptures; a separate table is not provided. While the monks are consuming their refreshments, the Scriptures remain on the stand. When they have finished their refreshments, the monks leave their seats to rinse out their mouths and then return to their sitting places. They then begin reading the Scriptures. They read the Scriptures from after breakfast until the time of the midday meal. At the three drummings that signal the midday meal, they rise from their sitting places. The daily reading of the Scriptures is limited to the period before the midday meal.

On the first day, a yellow signboard reading "Training Ground Established in Celebration of the Imperial Birthday" is hung under the eaves on the east side of the front of the Buddha Hall. Also, a yellow placard on which is written the intention of celebrating the Imperial Birthday is hung on the east pillar at the front of the Buddha Hall. The Abbot writes his name on a small piece of red or white paper; its two characters are written on the paper, which is then pasted on the face of the placard beneath the date. The Scripture reading continues in the manner previously described until the day of the Imperial Birthday, when the Abbot gives a lecture in the Monks' Hall in celebration. This is a custom from ancient times, one that is not out-of-date today.

Further, there is the Scripture reading that a monk does on his own. From the first, temples and monasteries have had a public hall for reading Scriptures. It is in this hall that a monk reads the Scriptures. The procedure for doing so is as given in the *Book of Rules and Regulations.*

> Great Master Igen, our founding Ancestor of Yakusan Mountain, once asked the novice monk Kō, "Did you come to realize the Truth through reading some Scripture or through requesting your Master's personal instruction?"
>
> The novice Kō replied, "I did not come to realize It through reading Scriptures or through requesting personal instruction."
>
> The Master said, "There are many people who do not read Scriptures or seek instruction, so how come they have not realized It?"
>
> The novice Kō replied, "I do not say that they do not have It. Simply, they have not dared to let themselves experience It."

In the house of the Buddhas and Ancestors, there are those who let themselves experience It and those who do not. Even so, reading Scriptures and seeking instruction are the common tools of our everyday life.

Delivered to the assembly at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the fifteenth day of the ninth lunar month in the autumn of the second year of the Ninji era (October 21, 1241).

Copied by me in the attendant monk's quarters at Daibutsu-ji Monastery in Yoshida Prefecture, Echizen Province, on the eighth day of the seventh lunar month in the third year of the Kangen era (August 1, 1245).

Ejō

21

On Buddha Nature

(Busshō)

Translator's Introduction: In the present discourse, Dōgen explores the multidimensional meanings of Buddha Nature. His discussion centers on two seemingly contradictory statements, namely, that all sentient beings have Buddha Nature and that all sentient beings lack a Buddha Nature. Confusion as to what these two statements are pointing to can easily arise because of the ambiguity of the Japanese verbs *u* and *mu*. The former term may mean 'to have', 'to possess', 'to be in possession of', 'to be possessed of', 'there is', 'there are', or '*X* exists'. The latter term functions to deny or negate the preceding, and it also supplies extended meanings such as 'to lack', 'to be devoid of', and 'to be beyond'. What Dōgen asserts—as do the Masters whom he quotes—is essentially that no sentient being is devoid of Buddha Nature and no sentient being possesses a thing called 'a Buddha Nature'. Further, as Dōgen also asserts, based on a line from a verse by Shakyamuni Buddha, all sentient beings have Buddha Nature through and through; that is, they are inseparable from Buddha Nature, are completely possessed of Buddha Nature, and indeed <u>are</u> Buddha Nature.

Along with the verse by Shakyamuni Buddha, Dōgen builds his discourse upon a number of kōan stories, each of which illustrates some way in which Buddha Nature has been either correctly or erroneously understood.

Shakyamuni Buddha said in verse:

> *All sentient beings have Buddha Nature through and through,*
> *And the Tathagata continually dwells therein, ever constant.*

This is the Lion's roar of our great Master, the Venerable Shakyamuni: it turns the Wheel of the Dharma, and, at the same time, it is the very skull and eyeballs of all Buddhas and all ancestral Masters. As of the second year of the Japanese Ninji era (1241), for two thousand one hundred and ninety years now, it has been explored through one's training with a Master. Genuine heirs down to my Master have resided in It and have been grounded in It for fifty generations—twenty-eight in India and twenty-three in China.[1] Buddhas and Ancestors everywhere are no different.

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1. Bodhidharma is counted as both the twenty-eighth Indian Ancestor and the first Chinese Ancestor.

And what would be the principle underlying the World-honored One's words, "All sentient beings have Buddha Nature through and through?" "It is That which manifests just so," as Enō put it in turning the Wheel of the Dharma. We call It 'a sentient being' or 'whatever has feelings' or 'every living being' or 'every manner of being'. The phrase 'to have It through and through' refers to 'sentient beings', that is, to all beings having existence. Accordingly, it is Buddha Nature that one has through and through, and any instance of 'having It through and through' we call 'a sentient being'. At such a time, what sentient beings experience as existing both within and outside themselves will, therefore, be their 'having Buddha Nature through and through'. It goes beyond the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow that are directly Transmitted from Master to disciple, one-to-one, because one has already acquired the Master's Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow.

You need to realize right now that the existence which is had through and through by Buddha Nature is beyond the existence of 'existing versus not existing'. 'Having It through and through' is the Buddha's term. It is the Tongue of Buddhas. It is the Eye of the Buddhas and Ancestors. It is the Nose of mendicant monks.

The phrase 'having It through and through', moreover, does not mean that one began having It at some moment, or that one had It to start with, or that one has It as some strange and mysterious thing, much less that one has It conditionally or arbitrarily. It has nothing to do with, say, 'the sphere of the mind' or 'the characteristics of one's true nature'. Hence, the external conditions and internal propensities of a sentient being's 'having It through and through' are beyond any influence from accumulations of past karma,* beyond anything that arises arbitrarily or conditionally, beyond anything that depends on thoughts or things that arise, beyond any spiritual power, and beyond any training done in order to experience the Truth. If the 'having It through and through' of sentient beings was based on past karma, or was the arising of some set of conditions, or the spontaneous arising of some thought or thing, then the path to awakening of all the saintly, the enlightenment of all the Buddhas, and the Eye of the Buddhas and Ancestors would be based on an accumulation of past karma, or would be the occurrence of some set of conditions, or the spontaneous arising of some thought or thing. But this is not the case. The whole realm of one's being is completely devoid of any defilements coming from without. Moreover, in an instant, there is no 'second person'.[2] But people are not apt to be concerned, straight off, with

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* See *Glossary*.

2. That is, upon one's spiritually awakening to Buddha Nature, the distinction of 'self and other' disappears.

cutting the roots of the defiling passions that they are afflicted with, for when does their ever-busy consciousness come to rest?

Buddha Nature is not the existence of something that arises arbitrarily or conditionally, for the whole realm of our being—which is Buddha Nature—is never hidden from us. But saying that the whole realm of our being is never hidden from us is not necessarily the same as saying that our physical world is what existence really is. The statement "The whole realm of my being is something that I possess" constitutes a false view of non-Buddhists. Buddha Nature is not the existence of something that one possesses at the start, for It pervades both our past and our present. It is not the existence of something that has arisen for the first time, for It does not partake of a single bit of illusory dust. It is not the existence of some particular being, for It encompasses all beings. It is not the existence of something that is beyond having a beginning, for It is something that makes Its appearance just in the way that It does. It is not the existence of something that has just come into being for the first time, for our ordinary, ever-present mind is synonymous with the Way.

Above all, you need to know that within this 'having It through and through', sentient beings do not readily find an easy or pleasant way to encounter It. When you understand 'having It through and through' in this manner, to have It through and through then means to penetrate Its very substance and to let all our notions and opinions about It drop off.

❀

Upon hearing the term 'Buddha Nature', many practitioners have erroneously surmised It to be the same as the non-Buddhist 'innate eternal self' of the Shrenikans.[3] This is because they have not yet become 'such a person',* or are not in accord with their True Self, or have not met with a genuine Master. To no avail, they take their mind, will, or consciousness, which are constantly on the move like wind and fire, to be their perception and comprehension of their Buddha Nature. Who has ever said that there is anything within Buddha Nature to perceive or comprehend? Even though persons who have perceived and comprehended It are Buddhas, Buddha Nature is beyond any thing we perceive or comprehend. Even more, the perception that leads us to recognize Buddhas as persons who have discerned It and know It is not perception as some people have erroneously explained it, for this perception lies beyond the realm of their mind, which is ever-

3. Dōgen discusses the Shrenikan view in Discourse 6: On 'Your Very Mind Is Buddha' *(Soku Shin Ze Butsu)*

moving like wind and fire. Simply put, a couple of faces of a Buddha or an Ancestor are what we perceive It to be.

In the long past, from the Chinese Han and T'ang dynasties down through the Sung dynasty, the virtuous monks of long ago sprang up like rice and hemp, bamboo and reeds. Having gone to India and returned, they taught the Way to both ordinary people and those in loftier positions. Sad to say, many believed that their mind's moving like wind and fire was their enlightened consciousness of Buddha Nature. Even though such persons were negligent in their exploration of the Way, their faulty remarks persist today. Present-day trainees and novices of the Buddha's Way should not be like them. Even though you may be exploring what enlightened perception is, one thing it is not is the mind's constant moving like wind and fire. And even though you explore its constant movement, this movement is not what It really is. If you have a realization of That which really moves, you will realize what true perception and comprehension are.

Buddha, being at one with Buddha Nature, is encountered everywhere, be it here or be it there. Buddha Nature is invariably what we have through and through, for That which we have through and through <u>is</u> Buddha Nature. What we have through and through is not a fragment of something that has been smashed into hundreds of bits, nor is It something as undifferentiated as a bar of solid iron. This is why a Master brandishes his fist to show It. It is beyond being large or small. What we have been calling 'Buddha Nature' is not to be equated with 'the saintly', nor, indeed, is it to be equated with Buddha Nature Itself.

There is a certain view which likens Buddha Nature to the seeds of plants and trees. When the rain of the Dharma pours down and moistens the seeds, they sprout and send forth shoots, then branch out and produce leaves, flowers, and fruit, with the fruit, in turn, becoming pregnant with seeds. To view and explain It in this manner is due to the sentimental thinking of ordinary people who wander through life in ignorance. Even though they view and explain It in this manner, you should investigate thoroughly through your training that each and every seed, along with each and every flower and fruit, is the product of an honest and sincere heart. There are seeds within the fruit, and even though the seeds are not visible, they will produce such things as roots and shoots. Even when left on their own, they become trees thick with branches large and small. Buddha Nature is beyond discussion of Its being something within or outside them, for nothing is devoid of It at any time, past or present. Thus, even though you put your trust in the view of such ordinary people, the roots, sprouts, branches, and leaves are alike in being born, alike in dying away, and alike in having It through and through.

❀

The Buddha said, "If you wish to grasp the meaning of 'Buddha Nature', just look at the conditions associated with the moment. Then, when the right moment arrives, Buddha Nature will manifest before your very eyes." Now, the statement, "If you wish to grasp the meaning of 'Buddha Nature'" does not simply mean having knowledge of It. Rather, it is tantamount to saying, "If you want to put It into practice, if you want to experience It directly, if you want to 'see' It," or even "If you want to get the thought of It out of your mind." And this giving voice to It, putting It into practice, experiencing It directly, dropping off thoughts of whether one is accurate or inaccurate about It, and so forth, are conditions associated with the moment. In contemplating the conditions associated with the moment, we contemplate by means of the conditions associated with the moment. It is our doing mutual contemplation by means of hossu* and traveling staff,* for instance.[4] Further, we cannot do our contemplation by employing intellectual discernment that is tainted with defiling passions or that is free of defiling passions, or by employing discernment derived from our original awakened state or from our first awakening, or by employing discernment derived from our not yet having awakened or from our having genuinely awakened. The Buddha's saying "just look" does not depend on our being able to look or on what we look at. What "just look" refers to is unconnected with such matters as 'genuine contemplation' and 'false contemplation'. Because it is 'just looking', it is not looking at ourselves or looking at anything else. It is pointing to the conditions of the moment and it is transcending the conditions of the moment: it is pointing to Buddha Nature and it is letting go of any concept of 'Buddha Nature'. It is Buddha pointing to Buddha: it is True Nature pointing to True Nature.

As to the phrase 'when the right moment arrives', folks in both the past and the present have frequently held the view that this means one simply waits for some future time when Buddha Nature will manifest before one's eyes. They believe that while doing their training and practice in this way, the time will arrive when Buddha Nature will spontaneously manifest before their eyes. They say that until that time comes, It will not manifest even by visiting one's Master and inquiring into the Dharma or even by doing one's best to practice the Way. Looking at the Matter* in this manner, they uselessly return to worldly ways, vainly waiting for It to fall down upon them from the heavens. Folks like this, I fear, are that type

4. The hossu and the traveling staff were often employed by Masters in various ways to point their disciples toward realizing Buddha Nature.

of non-Buddhist who believes that things just happen to happen, independent of any cause.

The Buddha's statement, "If you wish to grasp the meaning of 'Buddha Nature,'" was His way of saying, "If you want to know the meaning of 'Buddha Nature' here and now." His statement, "Just look at the conditions associated with the moment," was His way of saying, "Just discern what the conditions at this moment are." You need to realize that His saying "If you wish to know Buddha Nature" is synonymous with the conditions at the moment.

And as to His saying "When the right moment arrives," the moment has already arrived, so where is there room for doubt? Even if we should have doubts about whether it is the right moment, this is still Buddha Nature coming forth in us. You need to realize that the phrase "when the right moment arrives" means that we should not idle away any moment within a day. His saying "when it arrives" is as if He had said, "It has already come." When we get all involved with 'when the time comes', Buddha Nature does not come before us. Hence, since the time has already come, this is "Buddha Nature manifesting before our very eyes." In other words, the truth of It is self-evident. In sum, there has not yet been a time when the right moment has not come, nor is there a Buddha Nature which is not Buddha Nature manifesting before our very eyes right now.

❀

The Twelfth Indian Ancestor, Venerable Ashvaghoṣa, in describing the Ocean of Buddha Nature for the sake of the Thirteenth Ancestor, once said:

> *The great earth with its mountains and rivers*
> *Takes all its various forms completely in accord with It,*
> *And deep meditative states and the six spiritual powers*
> *Manifest themselves because of It.*

Accordingly, this great earth with all its mountains and rivers <u>is</u> the Ocean of Buddha Nature. To say that It takes all its various forms completely in accord with It means that, at such time as this materialization takes place, It is the great earth with its mountains and rivers. In his having said that the earth takes all its various forms in accord with It, you should realize that the form of the Ocean of Buddha Nature is like this. Further, It is not something to be associated with being inside, or outside, or in the midst of It. Since this is the way things are, to look at mountains and rivers is to look at Buddha Nature, and to see Buddha Nature is to

see the jaw of a donkey and the muzzle of a horse.[5] To assert that the phrase 'completely in accord with It' means 'totally in accord with It' or that it means 'being in accord with It in Its totality' is to understand the term and not to understand It.

As to the lines, "And deep meditative states and the six spiritual powers manifest themselves because of It," you need to understand that one's manifesting or not yet manifesting deep meditative states is all in accord with Buddha Nature. The dependence of all six spiritual powers upon It and their non-dependence upon It is 'all in accord with Buddha Nature'. These six spiritual powers are not simply the six spiritual powers spoken of in the *Āgama Scriptures*. 'Six' is another way of saying that the phrase 'three and three in front, and three and three behind'[6] is the perfection of the six spiritual powers.[7] So, do not spend your time in studying that the six spiritual powers are 'the hundreds of things that sprout up in your head ever so clearly' or that they are 'whatever so obviously motivates the Buddhas and Ancestors'. Even though the six spiritual powers may seem enticing, they are something that can create a hindrance to one's immersion in the Ocean of Buddha Nature.

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The Fifth Chinese Ancestor, Meditation Master Daiman Kōnin, was a native of Ōbai in Kishū Province. His father had died before he was born. He realized the Way whilst still a child and, as a practitioner of the Way, spent his life cultivating pine trees.

While planting pine trees on Mount Saizan in Kishū, he happened to meet the Fourth Ancestor, who was traveling through the area. The latter told him, "I would like to Transmit the Dharma to you, but you are already too old. If you would wait until your return in some other lifetime, I will still be looking for you." The forester consented to this.

Later, he went with the unmarried daughter of a family in the Shū clan and was reborn through her. In consequence of her not being married, she cast her baby

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5. 'To see a donkey's jaw and a horse's muzzle' is a traditional Zen Buddhist phrase for discerning concrete particulars without any taint of discriminatory judgment.

6. A classical Zen Buddhist phrase for an indefinite number of things or persons, 'three' meaning 'any number more than two'.

7. 'The perfection of the six spiritual powers' can be understood as a reference to the marvelous spiritual powers which Dōgen takes up in Discourse 24: On the Marvelous Spiritual Abilities *(Jinzū)*.

into a muddy creek. Divine beings protected him, and even after seven days he remained unharmed. As a result, she picked him up and nurtured him.[8]

He was a child of just seven years when he encountered the Fourth Ancestor, Meditation Master Daii Dōshin, on the road to Ōbai. The Ancestor saw that, even though he was a small boy, he was strikingly handsome and in no way ordinary looking.

> The Ancestor greeted him, saying, "What is your family name?"
>
> The boy answered, "Although I have a family name, it is not a conventional family name."
>
> When the Ancestor asked, "And what is this name?" he replied, "It is Buddha Nature."[9]
>
> The Ancestor said, "You do not have Buddha Nature."
>
> The boy replied, "Because Buddha Nature is devoid of anything that can be possessed, you therefore say that I do not have It."

Realizing the boy's capacity for training, the Ancestor asked his parent to let the boy leave home and come into the monastic family as his personal attendant. Because of the karma and circumstances of his parent, there was no particular impediment, so he abandoned lay life and became the Ancestor's disciple. Later, the Ancestor passed on to him the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. He took up residence on the Eastern Mountain at Ōbai, where he greatly displayed the profound Principle.

Accordingly, when we thoroughly examine the statements of these Ancestral Masters, there is a profound meaning underlying the Fourth Ancestor's words, "What is your family name?" Long ago, there was a person who described himself as "a native of the country of What," and there was another who gave as his name "the family name of What." Here, the Ancestor is making a statement, "Your

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8. Dōgen's account of Daiman Kōnin's past life as a forester and his subsequent birth, abandonment, and rescue by his mother is quite truncated. A fuller and clearer account is given by Meditation Master Keizan in his *Denkōroku* (Shasta Abbey Press, 1993), pp. 165-167.

9. There is an untranslatable play on words in this passage: the spoken Chinese word *hsing* can mean not only 'family name' but also, when written with a different character, it means '[one's Innate] Nature' and '[one's True] Nature'. Thus, when the dialogue is seen from the boy's perspective, he is, in effect, making a spiritual response to the conventional Chinese inquiry as to someone's family name (to ask someone's personal name is considered impolite). Dōgen later explores the subtler meanings of this dialogue when seen from the perspective of the Fourth Ancestor.

family name is What."[10] It was, for instance, like Enō stating to Nangaku, "I am 'just like This' and you are also 'just like This.'"

When the boy responded, "Although I have a family name, it is not a conventional family name," he was saying, "The name that I have is not a conventional name, since a conventional name would not be correct for That which I have." In the Fourth Ancestor's saying, "What is this name?" the term 'What' means This, for he had already made his This the What, which is Its name.[11] Our realizing the What is due to the This, and our realizing the This is a functioning of the What. Its 'name' is both This and What. We should make the This into our mugwort tea or our green tea; indeed, we should treat It as our everyday food and drink.

The deeper meaning behind the boy's saying, "It is Buddha Nature," is that the 'It' refers to 'Buddha Nature'.[12] Due to the What, one is Buddha. Were we to take his 'it' to a deeper level than just a response to "What is your family name?" then, at the time when his 'It' was no longer an 'it', It referred to 'Buddha Nature'. Thus, even though his 'It' refers to the What and refers to Buddha, when he came to drop everything off and realize the Truth, It was certainly his family name. That family name of his, accordingly, was the same as Shū would be. Even so, he did not receive It from his father or from his grandfather, nor was It like his mother's clan name, so how can It possibly be equated with the name of some third party?

To clarify the Fourth Ancestor's remark, "You do not have Buddha Nature," he is saying, in effect, "You are not It, and even though you put your trust in It, you do not possess Buddha Nature." You must comprehend this and explore it through your training, for when is it that someone does not have Buddha Nature? Does someone lack Buddha Nature upon starting out towards Buddhahood? Does someone lack Buddha Nature upon having gone beyond realizing Buddhahood? Do not become preoccupied with seven different ways of going, and do not go blindly groping for It in eight different directions.[13] And one can learn in training

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10. That is, one's True Nature is beyond any name we can give It, but for convenience It was referred to by some Zen Masters as 'What'.

11. The term 'This' was often used by Zen Masters to designate a direct pointing to That which goes beyond naming, that is, the 'What'. At the same time, the concrete This and the indescribable What are not separate; in other words, the This <u>is</u> the What.

12. The common classical Chinese word *shih* has a double meaning: '[it] is' and 'this [is]'. In this translation, when the word is referring to Buddha Nature, it is rendered as either 'It' or 'This', depending on which seems smoother in context.

13. That is, you do not need to seek Buddha Nature far and wide, because It is everywhere at all times.

that ‘not having Buddha Nature’ is, on some occasions, a meditative state. You should ask whether the time when Buddha Nature realizes Buddhahood is a time of ‘not having Buddha Nature’, and whether the time when Buddha Nature gives rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood is also a time of ‘not having Buddha Nature’. You should have the pillars* of the temple ask you, and you should ask the pillars of the temple, and you should have Buddha Nature ask.

Thus, the phrase ‘not having Buddha Nature’ is something that could be heard, long ago, coming from the quarters of the Fourth Ancestor. It was heard about from Kōnin, it was put into circulation by Jōshū, and it was promoted by Isan. By all means, concentrate on the words ‘not having Buddha Nature’ and do not fall into stagnation. Even though you should certainly trace your way back to ‘not having Buddha Nature’, you have Its measure (which is the What), you have Its moment in time (which is you), you have Its correspondence (which is the This), and you have the same family name as It (which is Shū), for all these directly point to It.

When the boy said, “Because Buddha Nature is devoid, you therefore say that It is beyond existence,”[14] he had put it clearly, for ‘being devoid’ does not mean ‘being nothing’. When he stated that Buddha Nature is devoid, he did not say that It is half a pound or that It is eight ounces, as some Masters have done: he uses the term ‘beyond existence’. Since It is devoid, he does not say that It is empty, and since It is beyond existence, he does not say that It is nothing: he says that since Buddha Nature is devoid, It is beyond existence.[15] Thus, when ‘beyond existence’ is said, this is a means of expressing Its being devoid, and ‘being devoid’ is a means of expressing Its being beyond existence. The ‘being devoid’ of which he speaks is not the ‘being empty’ in the statement from the *Heart Scripture* that “Material form is the same as being empty.” Although in the statement, “Material form is the same as being empty,” material form is not being forced into becoming empty, and emptiness is not being split up to manufacture material form, the ‘being devoid’ of which he spoke is that of ‘being devoid is what emptiness means’. The

14. In the following passage, context suggests that Dōgen is shifting his discussion of the word *mu*, meaning ‘not having’, from being devoid of anything that one can possess to not having existence in the sense of not being subject to arising, persisting, undergoing change, and disappearing. In order to help the reader in making this shift, this sentence has been retranslated from what was quoted earlier to bring out this double meaning of the term *mu*, which would otherwise be lost in translation.

15. In other words, Buddha Nature does not exist in the ordinary sense of ‘existing’—that is, being subject to change, as thoughts and things are—and is therefore described as ‘beyond existence’.

'being devoid' of 'being devoid is what emptiness means' is synonymous with Master Sekisō Keisho's calling it "a stone in space." So, this is how the Fourth and Fifth Ancestors inquired into and talked about the non-possessing of Buddha Nature, about the emptiness of Buddha Nature, and about the existence of Buddha Nature.

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> When the Sixth Chinese Ancestor, Meditation Master Daikan Enō of Mount Sōkei, first went to train on Mount Ōbai, the Fifth Ancestor asked him, "Where have you come from?"
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> Enō replied, "I am a native from south of the Peaks."[16]
>
> The Fifth Ancestor then asked, "What is it that you seek in coming here?"
>
> Enō replied, "I am seeking to become a Buddha."
>
> The Fifth Ancestor said, "People from south of the Peaks do not possess Buddha Nature, so how can you become a Buddha?"

In the Fifth Ancestor's saying that people from south of the Peaks do not possess Buddha Nature, he is not saying that people from south of the Peaks lack Buddha Nature, nor is he saying that people from south of the Peaks have a Buddha Nature: he means that people from south of the Peaks do not possess a Buddha Nature.[17] His saying, "How can you become a Buddha?" means "What sort of Buddha are you hoping to become?"

Generally speaking, senior monks who have clarified the principle of Buddha Nature are few. It is not something that you can learn from any of the *Āgama Scriptures* or from academic teachers of Scriptural texts and writers of erudite commentaries. It is something passed on directly, one-to-one, only to the descendants of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

The underlying principle of Buddha Nature is not that Buddha Nature is perfectly fulfilled before one has realized Buddhahood, but that It is perfectly fulfilled after realizing Buddhahood. Unquestionably, Buddha Nature is in complete harmony with realizing Buddhahood. You need to make a great effort indeed to explore this through your training, and you may need to explore it diligently for ten, twenty, or even thirty years. And it is not something that those 'thrice wise and ten times saintly' * have clarified. To state that sentient beings

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16. That is, from southeast China.

17. That is, Buddha Nature is not something one can possess since It is not something apart from or less than oneself.

have Buddha Nature and that sentient beings do not possess a Buddha Nature is to state this very principle. And the correct way for you to proceed is to explore through your training that this principle is the Teaching that Buddha Nature will be fully perfected from the moment of your realizing Buddhahood and beyond. What you do not explore in this way will not be the Buddha Dharma. If you do not do your exploring in this way, you cannot hope to arrive at the Buddha Dharma this very day. If you do not clarify what this principle is, you will not clarify what realizing Buddhahood is, nor will you hear of Its existence. This is why the Fifth Ancestor, in addressing the one facing him, made the remark that people from south of the Peaks do not possess Buddha Nature. In encountering a Buddha and hearing His Dharma for the very first time, what is hard to come by and difficult to hear about is that all sentient beings lack a Buddha Nature.[18] Whether you are following a good spiritual friend or following a Scriptural text, what you should take delight in hearing about is that sentient beings do not possess a Buddha Nature. Someone who does not come and participate in learning about and comprehending that all sentient beings lack a Buddha Nature is someone who has not yet learned about or comprehended what Buddha Nature is. In that Enō was wholeheartedly seeking to become Buddha, the Fifth Ancestor said nothing else, nor did he employ any other skillful means to facilitate Enō's realizing Buddhahood. He simply said, "People from south of the Peaks do not possess Buddha Nature." You need to realize that to say and to hear that one does not possess Buddha Nature is the straight path to realizing Buddhahood. So, the very moment that people go beyond 'possessing Buddha Nature' will be the very moment that they realize Buddhahood. Those who have not yet learned of going beyond 'possessing Buddha Nature' have not yet realized Buddhahood.

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After becoming the Sixth Ancestor, Enō once said, "For human beings, there is a north and a south; for Buddha Nature, there is no north or south." Being presented with this statement, you should work hard on understanding the meaning of this expression. You should reflect on the phrase 'north or south' with an open mind, for there is a deeper meaning in the expression that the Sixth Ancestor has given us. Namely, there is a way of taking it to mean that, even though people may realize Buddhahood, Buddha Nature cannot realize Buddhahood. I wonder, did the Sixth Ancestor comprehend this or not?

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18. That is, they lack a Buddha Nature because they <u>are</u> Buddha Nature through and through.

Long ago, having received a bit of the Teaching that the Fourth and Fifth Ancestors later voiced as 'not possessing Buddha Nature', Kashō Buddha, as well as Shakyamuni Buddha, among others, upon realizing Buddhahood and turning the Wheel of the Dharma, had the ability to state that one has Buddha Nature through and through. This Teaching has the capacity to hold us to just the way things are. So, how could Their 'having It' in 'having It through and through' fail to be Their inheriting of the Dharma that is expressed as 'not possessing It', in which there is no lacking It? Thus, the words 'not possessing Buddha Nature' could be heard long ago in the quarters of the Fourth and Fifth Ancestors. If, at that time, the Sixth Ancestor was indeed 'such a person', then we should work diligently on the words, 'not possessing Buddha Nature'.

Putting aside the 'not having' implied by 'possessing versus non-possessing', we should ask, "What is Buddha Nature?" That is, we should inquire into what sort of thing Buddha Nature is. People nowadays, upon hearing of Buddha Nature, do not ask, "What <u>is</u> Buddha Nature?" Instead, they concern themselves with matters like whether someone does or does not have a Buddha Nature. This is a shallow way of going about the Matter. So, among the various meanings of 'not having', we need to explore 'not having' in the sense of 'there not being Buddha Nature'. Again and again, we should try to fish out what is meant by the Sixth Ancestor's statement, "For human beings, there is a north and a south; for Buddha Nature, there is no north or south," for we doubtless have the ability to wield a fishhook. We need to calmly take up <u>and</u> not hold onto the words, "For people, there is a north and a south; for Buddha Nature, there is no north or south," which the Sixth Ancestor uttered. There are some befuddled persons who hold to the following opinion, "Doesn't what the Sixth Ancestor said mean that a north and a south exist for human beings due to their hard-edged physical nature, but since Buddha Nature has no such limitations and is all-pervading, It is beyond any notions of north or south?" To speculate in this way is sheer silliness. You should disregard this false explanation in your diligent exploration of what the Ancestor said.

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The Sixth Ancestor, in giving teaching to his disciple, Gyōshō, once said, "Impermanence is, of course, Buddha Nature, and permanence is, in fact, the mind dividing up all things into good or bad." The impermanence of which the Sixth Ancestor spoke is beyond the conjecturing of non-Buddhists and those who follow the Two Lesser Courses.* Although the non-Buddhists and those of the Two Lesser Courses—extending from those persons who founded their traditions up to their most recent descendants—may speak of something being impermanent, it is

unlikely that they are able to fully fathom what It is. Thus, for the one who would clarify, put into practice, and fully realize impermanence as being impermanent in itself, all will be impermanence. Those who can help others reach the Other Shore through manifesting their True Self will manifest It and give voice to the Dharma for that purpose: this is Buddha Nature. Further, sometimes they will display the Dharma Body as something tall and sometimes they will display It as something short. What is constantly saintly is impermanent and what is constantly ordinary is impermanent. The view that those who are just ordinary people and not saintly ones, and thus must lack Buddha Nature, is a foolish opinion held by some folks who are small-minded; such a view constitutes a narrow perspective which their intellect has conjectured. For the small-minded, 'Buddha' is a body and 'Nature' is its functioning, which is the very reason why the Sixth Ancestor said, "What is impermanent is, of course, Buddha Nature."

What seems constant has simply not yet undergone change. 'Not yet undergone change' means that, even though we may shift our perspective to our subjective self or shift it to the objective, outer world, in both cases there are no signs of change to be found. In that sense, it is constant.[19] As a consequence, grasses and trees, as well as thickets and forests, are impermanent and, accordingly, they are Buddha Nature. It is the same with the human body and mind, both of which are impermanent and, accordingly, they are Buddha Nature. The mountains and rivers in the various lands are impermanent, so, accordingly, they are Buddha Nature. Supreme, fully perfected enlightenment is Buddha Nature, and hence it is impermanent. The Buddha's great entry into nirvana was impermanent, and hence it is Buddha Nature.

Those of the Two Lesser Courses with limited insight, along with the academic teachers of the Scriptures and writers of erudite commentaries, must surely be appalled, skeptical, frightened, or awed by what the Sixth Ancestor said. Should people become appalled or skeptical, they will be some sort of devilish obstructionists or non-Buddhists.

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In India the Fourteenth Indian Ancestor was called the Venerable Nāgārjuna, meaning 'He Who Was Born Under the Tree of the Nāgās', and in T'ang China he was called 'He Who Is a Tree for Dragons' and 'He Who Surpasses the Dragons',

19. That is, the ever-present 'now' is what is constant, even though there is that which we consider to be separate from the 'now', namely, the future and the past.

as well as 'He Who Is as Fierce as a Dragon'.[20] He was a native of Western India. He went to Southern India, where he gave voice to the Wondrous Dharma for the sake of the people there, since a great many of them believed that happiness was simply a matter of fate.

> Those who heard his Teaching said amongst themselves, "The most important thing in the world is the happiness that people are fated to have. He talks so meaninglessly about some 'Buddha Nature'. Who has been able to see such a thing?"
>
> The Venerable One responded, "If you wish to see Buddha Nature, you must first rid yourself of your arrogant pride."
>
> One of them asked, "Is Buddha Nature larger than I am or smaller?"
>
> The Venerable One replied, "Buddha Nature is neither large nor small, neither vast nor constricted. It is beyond happiness, beyond retribution, for It is undying and unborn." When the person heard these superior principles, he completely turned his mind around.
>
> The Venerable One, whilst still in the Dharma Seat, then revealed himself to be so free of any worldly ways that he looked like the orb of the Moon at Its full. But all those assembled there merely heard the sounds of the Teaching and did not observe the Master's appearance.
>
> One amongst them, however, Kānadaiba by name, the son of a town elder, said to those assembled, "Don't you see his appearance?"
>
> Those in the assembly said, "What we do not see with our eyes or hear with our ears right now does not exist, for it is not something that we can know with our minds or experience with our bodies."
>
> Kānadaiba said, "This is the Venerable One's manifesting his Buddha Nature, by means of which he shows us how we can know It. By being cloaked in It, his meditative state, which is free of attachments, takes on a form resembling the Moon at Its full, for the meaning of 'Buddha Nature' is That which is utterly unbounded and radiant."
>
> Once Kānadaiba had finished speaking, the orb-like look seemed to disappear. Then, whilst still occupying his Dharma Seat, Nāgārjuna spoke in verse, saying:

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20. The Sanskrit word *nāgā*, which forms the first part of Nāgārjuna's name, means serpent. When the word came to China, it was translated as dragon.

Through my body, I have manifested the look of the Full Moon,
Thereby displaying the physical presence of all Buddhas.
My voicing of the Dharma has no fixed form,
For Its real functioning is beyond what is said, or how.[21]

You need to realize that the genuine functioning of the Dharma is beyond any immediate display of what is said or how It is put. A genuine voicing of the Dharma has no set form. The Venerable One was ever engaged in giving voice to Buddha Nature far and wide, on innumerable occasions. We have given just one brief example here.

You need to discern and affirm for yourself the underlying meaning of his saying, "If you wish to see Buddha Nature, you must first rid yourself of your arrogant pride." It is not that one lacks sight, but the seeing of which he spoke is based on ridding oneself of one's arrogant pride. The arrogance of self is not just of one kind, and pride takes many forms. Methods for ridding oneself of these will also be diverse and myriad. Even so, all of these methods will be 'one's seeing Buddha Nature'. Thus, you need to learn both to look with your eyes and to see with your Eye.

Do not equate the Master's statement, "Buddha Nature is neither large nor small," with similar words used by those who wander through life in ignorance or by those of the Two Lesser Courses. Those who merely think one-sidedly that Buddha Nature is something vast and enormous are harboring a false notion. Because we make use of what we are hearing as the subject for our consideration, we need to consider Its underlying principle as we hear it here and now, unimpeded by the Master's statement that It is neither large nor small.

Now, let us give ear to the verse that the Venerable One spoke, specifically his lines, "Through my body, I have manifested the look of the Full Moon, thereby displaying the physical presence of all Buddhas." Because the display of the physical presence of all Buddhas is a manifestation of one's Spiritual Body, it has the look of the Full Moon. Accordingly, you need to grasp that all manner of tallness and shortness, as well as of squareness and roundness, are manifestations

21. The phrase 'the look of the Moon at Its full' in this poem and in subsequent paragraphs refers to the discernible characteristics of one who has fully realized his or her Buddha Nature. In some instances, this phrase is misunderstood and taken literally by persons of worldly mind, in which cases it is rendered as 'the look of a full moon'. Similarly, the term 'body' is used when it refers to the physical body, whereas the term 'Spiritual Body' is used in reference to the spiritual Enlightenment Body, which manifests 'the look of the Moon at Its full'.

of your Spiritual Body. Those who are ever so ignorant of what this Spiritual Body is and of what manifesting It means are not only in the dark about the look of the Full Moon, they are not displaying the physical presence of all Buddhas. Foolish people fancy that the Venerable One provisionally displayed his body in some altered form, which is described as 'the look of a full moon', but this is an arbitrary and false notion of those who have not had the Buddha's Way Transmitted to them from Master to disciple, for where or when would It possibly manifest as something separate from and independent of one's body? What is important for you to recognize is simply that, at the time, the Venerable One was seated on the raised platform of a Dharma teacher. His body showed itself in the same manner as the body of anyone sitting here now, for this body of ours is, in fact, a manifestation of the Moon at Its full. His manifestation of the Spiritual Body is beyond being something square or round, beyond something existing or not existing, beyond something hidden or revealed, beyond something consisting of eighty-four thousand components: it is simply the manifestation of his Spiritual Body. 'The look of the Full Moon' describes the Moon implied in Fuke's remark, "Right here is where the What is, whether the matter is put clumsily or delicately."[22] Because this manifestation of his Spiritual Body is rid of any arrogant pride, It goes beyond his being Nāgārjuna; It is the physical presence of all Buddhas. Because he displayed It, his Spiritual Body passes through and beyond the physical presence of all Buddhas. Hence, It has no connection with whatever may be on the periphery of the Buddha's Way.

Although there is the Unbounded Radiance which takes some form like 'the Moon of Buddha Nature at Its Full', It is beyond what is commonly construed as 'the look of a full moon'. And what is more, Its real functioning is beyond what is said or how it is put, and the manifestation of this Spiritual Body is beyond the physical and the mental, beyond the realm of the skandhas.* Although It completely resembles the realm of the skandhas, It displays Itself by means of them, for this realm is the physical presence of all Buddhas. The Buddhas are the skandhas which give expression to the Dharma; the Unbounded Radiance has no set form. Further, when Its not having any set form is evinced by the meditative state that has no attachments, this is a manifestation of one's Spiritual Body. Even though our whole assembly may desire to see 'the look of the Moon at Its full', this is something one's eyes have never seen before. It is the turning point for the skandhas, which will give voice to the Dharma, and it is the absence of any fixed way in how the Dharma is stated or what form It may take, while the Spiritual

22. This remark appears in one of the stories contained in Dōgen's Chinese *Shinji Shōbōgenzō.* The full story is translated in the Addendum immediately following this discourse.

Body manifests freely as It will. Its very 'being hidden from sight' and Its very 'being openly displayed' is Its stepping forward and stepping back in a cyclic manner. At the very time when Nāgārjuna's Spiritual Body was manifesting Itself freely as he sat upon his platform, the whole assembly merely heard the words of the Dharma and did not perceive the 'look' of their teacher.

The Venerable Kānadaiba, who was Nāgārjuna's Dharma heir, clearly recognized the Full Moon, the perfection of that Full Moon, the manifestation of Nāgārjuna's Spiritual Body, the look of all Buddhas, and the physical presence of all Buddhas. Although there were many within the assembly who had entered the Master's private quarters and had had the Buddhist Teachings poured into them, none could stand head-and-shoulders with Kānadaiba. Kānadaiba was respected for his Master's sharing the Dharma seat with him, and he functioned as a teacher and guide for the whole assembly, since his partial seat was the whole of the Dharma seat. In that he had had the great, unsurpassed Dharma of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching authentically Transmitted to him, it was just like the Venerable Makakashō occupying the chief Dharma seat on Vulture Peak.[23]

During the time when he was involved in non-Buddhist teaching, Nāgārjuna had had many disciples. Even so, once he turned his own heart around, he expressed his thanks to them all and disbanded his classes. After Nāgārjuna became an Ancestor of the Buddha, he authentically Transmitted the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching to Kānadaiba, considering him alone to be his true heir. This was the simple, one-to-one Transmission of the unsurpassed Way of the Buddha. Despite this, groups of pretenders arrogantly boasted, "We too are the Dharma heirs of the great scholar Nāgārjuna." They composed treatises and compiled commentaries, often forging Nāgārjuna's hand. But such are not the works of Nāgārjuna. These masses of followers, whom he had long before dismissed, have confused and corrupted both ordinary persons and those in lofty positions. As disciples of the Buddha, you need to know that whatever was not authentically Transmitted directly to Kānadaiba is not the word and Way of Nāgārjuna. This is the correct belief that will make it possible for you to reach your goal. Even so, there are many who have accepted those spurious works as spiritual nourishment, even while being aware that they were fraudulent. This foolish thickheadedness of human beings who insult great enlightened Wisdom is sad and pitiful indeed.

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23. A reference to Shakyamuni's sharing His Dharma seat with His Dharma heir, Makakashō, who led the Sangha after the Buddha's parinirvana, thus becoming the First Ancestor.

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On the occasion when the Venerable Kānadaiba pointed to the Venerable Nāgārjuna's manifestation of the Spiritual Body, he commented to those assembled there, "This is the Venerable One's manifesting his Buddha Nature, by means of which he shows us how we can know It. By being cloaked in It, his meditative state, which is free of attachments, takes on a form resembling the Moon at Its full, for the meaning of 'Buddha Nature' is That which is utterly unbounded and radiant."

Now, among those skin bags,* past or present, who have heard the Buddha Dharma as It has spread through the heavens above, the world of humans, and the great thousandfold worlds that comprise the universe, which of them has said that the look of someone manifesting his or her Spiritual Body is what Buddha Nature is? Throughout the great universe, the Venerable Kānadaiba alone has stated it. The rest have merely asserted that Buddha Nature is not something seen with the eyes, or heard with the ears, or grasped by the mind, or whatever. Because they have not realized that the manifesting of one's Spiritual Body is Buddha Nature, they have not stated it. Although their ancestral Master was not loath to manifest It, their ears were shut so that they never heard about It. Since they had not yet comprehended what their Spiritual Body was, It was not something that they ever fully discerned. Hoping to see the meditative state that is free of characteristics as something with a form resembling the moon at its full, they respectfully bowed, but their eyes had not yet caught sight of It.

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"The meaning of 'Buddha Nature' is That which is utterly unbounded and radiant." Thus, the manifestation of the Spiritual Body is one's giving voice to Buddha Nature, for It is unbounded radiance and It is absolute. To give voice to Buddha Nature means to manifest the Spiritual Body, for it is the means by which the physical presence of all Buddhas is displayed. Where is the Buddha, or the pair of Buddhas, whose display of It did not take on the physical presence of a Buddha?[24] The physical presence of a Buddha is someone's manifesting the Spiritual Body, and Buddha Nature exists as that person's manifestation of the Spiritual Body. On the other hand, the ability of the Buddhas and Ancestors to speak of It and understand It in terms of the four elements* and the five skandhas is also Their momentary manifestation of the Spiritual Body. The physical presence

24. 'One Buddha' refers to someone who has realized the Truth, whereas 'a pair of Buddhas' is an allusion to a Master and a disciple after Transmission.

of all Buddhas, which we have already spoken about, is just like the realm of the skandhas. All Their functioning is the functioning of this realm. The way that Buddhas function completely plumbs the depths of how the Spiritual Body manifests when It encompasses all Its diverse forms. All the comings and goings of Their immeasurable, unbounded functioning are instances of this Spiritual Body being made manifest.

Even so, since the time of Master Nāgārjuna and his disciple Kānadaiba, among those who spiritually explored Buddhism as it existed in earlier and later generations throughout India, China, and Japan, no one has ever said anything the equal of what Nāgārjuna and Kānadaiba said. How many teachers of Scriptures, as well as erudite scholars of Their commentaries and the like, have tripped over what the Buddhas and Ancestors have said? From ancient times, there have been those in Great Sung China who attempted to illustrate this incident, but they were unable to portray it either physically or mentally, nor could they draw it in space or upon a wall. Vainly sketching with their writing brush, they endeavored to depict Nāgārjuna's 'manifestation of the Spiritual Body as the look of the Full Moon' by sketching a mirror-like circle above a Dharma seat. These people have intended their depictions to be as gold dust before people's eyes, yet even though the frosts of autumn and the flowers of spring have appeared and faded away for centuries since, not a soul has said they err. How sad that so many matters have been bungled like this! If Nāgārjuna's manifesting the 'Spiritual Body with the look of the Full Moon' is taken to mean that It had the look of a circle, it would be a real picture of a rice cake.[25] These artists' playing around with people like this is silly enough to make one die laughing. Sad to say, in a kingdom like Great Sung China, nary a householder or a monk has heard and understood the words of Nāgārjuna, or is familiar with what Kānadaiba said, or has even encountered it, let alone having any familiarity with the manifestation of one's Spiritual Body! They are in the dark about the Full Moon, and the Moon at Its full has waned for them. This is because they are remiss in their examination of the past and lack a fondness for examples from the past as well. Further, in your endeavor to encounter the real manifestation of the Spiritual Body of old and new Buddhas, do not prize or play around with 'pictures of rice cakes'. You need to know that, when you attempt to depict the characteristics of the Spiritual Body manifesting with the look of the Full Moon, you should use the image of Nāgārjuna's body seated upon a Dharma seat. His raised eyebrows and twinkling eyes will be straight to the point. The Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching within his very Skin and Flesh, Bones and

25. That is, like a picture of a rice cake, it would be incapable of providing nourishment or satisfying one's hunger.

Marrow will undoubtedly be portrayed by his sitting upright and still. You should convey his face, which beams with the sweetest smile because he has become a Buddha and an Ancestor. To the degree that this portrait of yours does not yet have the look of the Moon, it will lack anything resembling Its form, and it will not give expression to the Dharma either in what is conveyed or how, nor will it have Its genuine functioning.

If you desire to depict the Spiritual Body, you must the use the Full Moon as your model. When you wish to use the Full Moon as your model, you must specifically use only the Full Moon, for this is the way that the Spiritual Body manifests Itself. When you wish to portray the look of the Full Moon, you must model it only on the look of the Moon at Its full. And you must demonstrate the look of the Moon at Its full. On the other hand, if you do not portray the manifestation of the Spiritual Body, or portray the Full Moon, or portray the Moon at Its full, or aim at portraying the physical presence of all Buddhas, or embody the displaying of this presence, or aim at manifesting the Dharma, you will be vainly drawing a picture of a rice cake, and what does that get you? If you are quick to set your sights straight, who of you will not be sated right here and now, and not go hungry?[26]

Just as the moon is circular in form, so circularity is a manifestation of one's Spiritual Body.[27] In your investigation of circularity, do not examine it as if it were the roundness of a coin, or liken it to a rice cake. The Spiritual Body is the body of the moon in its characteristic circular shape, so Its form is like the form of the Moon at Its full. You should investigate a coin or a rice cake, too, in terms of their circularity.

❀

While I was still drifting about like a cloud, I went to Great Sung China. It was about the end of autumn in the sixteenth year of the Chinese Chia-ting era (1223) when I first arrived at Kōri temple on Mount Ashoka. I saw that someone

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26. In this paragraph, Dōgen explains that in order to draw a correct picture of a human being's manifestation of Buddha Nature, you need to use as your basis the picture of a human being, rather than using some abstract object such as a circle. In order to emphasize this point, he talks about using the Moon at Its full as the model for drawing a Full Moon. This is comparable to saying that if you want to draw a picture of a round plate, use a plate that is round as your model, rather than, say, using some other round object or using a plate that is square.

27. 'Circularity' implies something that has no beginning or ending, that is all-encompassing, and is ever flowing, ever changing, now coming forth, now receding.

had painted portraits of the thirty-three Indian and Chinese Ancestors on the wall of the western corridor. At the time, I did not grasp their meaning. Later, during the summer retreat in the first year of the Chinese Kia-ch'ing era (1225), I happened to return there, and while walking along the corridor with Guestmaster Jōkei of Szechwan Province, I asked him, "Whose picture is this?" The Guestmaster answered, "It is the appearance of a full moon which represents Nāgārjuna's body." When he spoke thus, his countenance showed no nose for the Great Matter, nor was there any expression of It in his voice. I commented, "There is no more to this than a painting of a rice cake." Even though the Guestmaster burst out laughing at the time, there was no sword within his laugh that was capable of smashing a painted rice cake to bits. Subsequently, as the Guestmaster and I visited the Relics Hall and the six scenic spots of the monastery, I brought up the issue of the picture again several times, but not even the slightest inkling of what it was about ever arose in him. Naturally, there were also many other monks who put forth their opinions, but they too were completely useless. So I said, "I'll try raising the question with the Abbot." The Abbot at the time was the monk Daikō. The Guestmaster remarked, "He probably won't be able to give you an answer as he doesn't have the nose for that kind of thing. So how could he know anything about it?" Therefore, I did not ask the Venerable Daikō. Although my monastic brother Jōkei talked to me in this way, he himself had no understanding either. Those other skin bags who heard our talk also had nothing to contribute. Generations of Abbots presiding at that temple's meals of gruel and rice had never looked at that picture and wondered about it, so they had never revised and corrected their understanding of it. Further, when there are things that you cannot possibly depict, then you should not try to depict them at all, and what you can depict, you should depict in a straightforward manner. Despite this, the look of the Full Moon which is the manifestation of one's Spiritual Body is something that one never depicts.

To speak more broadly, in that such persons have not awakened from their present opinions and personal views that Buddha Nature is somehow synonymous with the intellective, perceptual, or cognitive functions of their mind, it is as if they had lost the distinction of meaning between the phrases 'possessing Buddha Nature' and 'not possessing Buddha Nature'. This can be understood only by those with true understanding, and rare indeed are those who have even tried to investigate how to make such distinctions. You should know that this lack of effort on their part was due to the fact that such investigations had gone out of fashion. In many places, there have been Abbots presiding at meals of gruel and rice who have died without once in their whole life even mentioning the term 'Buddha Nature'. And some among them have said that those who pay heed to Scriptural Teachings may discuss Buddha Nature, but those who practice Zen meditation should not

speak of It. Folks who talk like this are truly beasts! What a bunch of demons they are to mingle with and defile the Way of our Buddha Tathagata! Is what they call 'paying heed to the Scriptural Teachings' the Way of the Buddha? Or is what they call 'practicing Zen meditation' the Way of the Buddha? Recognize that what they are calling 'paying heed to the Scriptural Teachings' and 'practicing Zen meditation' are still not the Way of the Buddha.

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National Teacher Enkan Saian in Kangshū Province was an esteemed Master under Baso. He once pointed out to his assembly, "All sentient beings are possessed of Buddha Nature." Right away, we need to thoroughly examine his words 'all sentient beings'. All sentient beings have different internal propensities and external conditions, which are the fruits of past karma, so their perspectives are different. This holds true for each and every one of them, be they called 'ordinary people', 'non-Buddhists', 'those in the Three Courses', 'those in the Five Courses', or something else.[28] 'All sentient beings', as spoken of in the Buddha's Way in the present instance, means that all who possess a mind filled with craving are 'sentient beings', since having a mind is synonymous with being a sentient being.[29] All those whose mind is beyond craving will likewise be sentient beings, since being a sentient being is synonymous with having a mind.[30] Accordingly, all minds are, without exception, sentient beings, and all sentient beings are, without exception, possessed of Buddha Nature. And even grasses, trees, and our very nation are synonymous with Mind, and because they are synonymous with Mind, they are sentient beings, and because they are sentient beings, they are possessed of Buddha Nature. And, likewise, the sun, the moon, and the stars are synonymous with Mind, and because they are synonymous with Mind, they are sentient beings,

28. Those in the Three Courses are the shravakas, the pratyekabuddhas, and the bodhisattvas. Those in the Five Courses are the above three, plus lay Buddhists who have taken and keep to the first five of the Ten Precepts, and those in lofty positions ('celestial beings') who devote themselves to doing good deeds and practicing meditation.

29. That is, mind does not exist as an entity independent of human existence (such as the Subtle Intelligence posited by the Shrenikans).

30. In referring to the mind in this passage, Dōgen uses two words. The first *(ushin)* has two meanings: having or possessing a mind and having a mind that is enmeshed in attachments. The second *(mushin)* refers to a mind that has dropped off its attachments. This latter state of mind, however, also encompasses the first meaning of *ushin* as simply 'having a mind'.

and because they are sentient beings, they are possessed of Buddha Nature.[31] 'Being possessed of Buddha Nature', which the National Teacher spoke of, is no different. Were it different, it would not be the 'being possessed of Buddha Nature' that is put forth in the Buddha's Way. The core of what the National Teacher said is simply that all sentient beings are possessed of Buddha Nature. Further, if anything were not a sentient being, it would not be possessed of Buddha Nature. Right now, it would be good for you to ask of the National Teacher, "Are all the Buddhas possessed of Buddha Nature?" since to inquire in this way will put him to the test. You should examine carefully that he did not say, "All sentient beings are the same as Buddha Nature," but said, "All sentient beings are possessed of Buddha Nature." A Buddha will have discarded any sense of possessing something as implied by the phrase 'possessing Buddha Nature'. Their discarding of it is Their being at one with all things, as if all were a single, solid iron bar, and Their being at one with all things is as the passage of birds, which leaves no traces. As a consequence, all Buddhas are possessed of Buddha Nature. For this reason, the truth of what the National Teacher said not only penetrates through what 'sentient beings' means, but also penetrates through what 'Buddha Nature' means. Even though the National Teacher may not have fully understood all the implications of what he was saying, this does not mean that he lacked the opportunity to understand them, nor does it mean that the essence of what he said is meaningless for us today.

Also, even though you may not yet have understood for yourself the Truth with which you are already equipped, you have Its four elements and five skandhas, and you have Its Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow. Thus it is that there are some whose affirmation of It takes their whole lifetime to affirm, and there are others for whom it takes lifetimes to affirm It.

❀

Meditation Master Isan of Mount Daii once said to his assembly, "All sentient beings lack a Buddha Nature." Among the ordinary people and those in lofty positions who hear this, there will be those who will be delighted because of their great capacity for understanding, and there will also be no shortage of those who will be disquieted and filled with doubt. This is because the Venerable Shakyamuni stated that all sentient beings have Buddha Nature through and through, whereas Isan is saying that all sentient beings lack a Buddha Nature. Since the meaning of the words 'have' and 'lack' must surely be greatly different,

31. That is, the whole universe and everything in it is Buddha Nature.

some may harbor doubts as to which statement is true to the mark and which is not. Even so, in the Buddha's Way, only Isan's statement, "All sentient beings lack a Buddha Nature," excels National Teacher Enkan's. Even though Enkan's phrase about 'being possessed of Buddha Nature' resembles a stretching forth of a pair of hands along with the former Buddha, nevertheless, this remark is the same as a traveling staff being shouldered by two people.[32] Now, Isan's phrase is not like this; his observation is like a traveling staff absorbing two people.[33] Moreover, even though the National Teacher was a monastic son of Baso, and Isan was a monastic grandson of Baso, the Dharma grandson was an old hand at his grandfather's way of putting the Matter, whereas the Dharma son was a youngster when it came to his father's way of putting It. The gist of what Isan said has made "All sentient beings lack a Buddha Nature" his underlying principle. He did not say anything that is even vaguely beyond the straight and narrow of Buddhist Teaching. This is how he received and preserved the Scriptures within the quarters of his own monastic tradition.

Further, it is imperative that you ferret out how it is that all sentient beings are Buddha Nature, and in what sense they are possessed of Buddha Nature. If any people assert that they possess a Buddha Nature, they must surely be the henchmen of demons who will, one day or another, attempt to wrap all sentient beings up in a demon child's swaddling clothes. Since Buddha Nature <u>is</u> Buddha Nature, sentient beings are sentient beings. Sentient beings, from the start, have never been equipped with a Buddha Nature. Even though they may wish to possess such a thing, the point is that Buddha Nature, in the first place, is not something that <u>can</u> come along with anyone. Do not assert that when Mr. Chang drinks wine, Mr. Li gets drunk. If anything possessed 'a Buddha Nature' in and of itself, such a thing would not be a sentient being. If anything possessed 'being a sentient being', then ultimately such a thing would not be Buddha Nature. This is why Hyakujō said, "To assert that a sentient being possesses Buddha Nature slanders Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. And to assert that a sentient being lacks Buddha Nature slanders Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha." Accordingly, to say that one possesses a Buddha Nature and to say that one lacks Buddha Nature both become slander. Even though they become slander, it does not mean that one cannot say anything

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32. The traveling staff was often used by Masters to point a disciple towards the Truth, that is, towards which way to go. Hence, according to Dōgen, while Enkan's statement may seem to be expanding upon what the Buddha said, in reality he was merely repeating the same thing over again.

33. Dōgen's descriptive phrase may refer to the face-to-face relationship in Transmission, wherein Master and disciple are absorbed together in That which points to the Truth.

about It. Were Isan and Hyakujō able to hear me at this moment, I would now say to Hyakujō, "Granted that both are slanderous, are you able to state what Buddha Nature is? Even though you can state what It is, such a statement may restrict the way of expressing It. If you do have a way of expressing It, such an expression will be in complete harmony with how it is heard." And turning to Isan, I would remark, "Even though your saying that all sentient beings lack a Buddha Nature expresses It through words, you did not say that all of Buddha Nature lacks sentient beings and you did not say that all of Buddha Nature lacks Buddha Nature, and, what is more, you have not yet seen even in your dreams that each and every one of the Buddhas lacks a Buddha Nature. Should you give it another try, I'd like to take a look at it."

❀

Meditation Master Hyakujō, in giving teaching to his assembly, said:

> It is Buddha that is the unsurpassed Vehicle.[34] It is Supreme Wisdom. It is what establishes people in the Buddha's Way. It is the very Buddha Nature which a Buddha is possessed of. It is the Teacher and Guide who makes unhindered use of everything for the sake of others. It is unimpeded in Its discernment. Hence It is able to make good use of karmic cause and effect, and is naturally joyful and wise. Its cart wheels continually roll forward, carrying forth karmic causality. When dealing with life, It does not experience life as something that ceases. When dealing with death, It does not experience death as a hindrance. When dealing with the five skandhas, It does not experience the five skandhas as impediments, but rather as portals that are open; coming and going at will, It suffers no difficulties in going in and out of them. If you can be like this, there will be no need to discuss higher or lower stages of spiritual development. Indeed, if even an ant can be like this, then it will be, through and through, a wondrous Pure Land, beyond anything we can possibly imagine.

This, then, was Hyakujō's way of expressing the Matter. The five skandhas comprise our intact body at this very moment. Whatever we are doing right now is the opening of a portal, and it opens without our experiencing any impediments from our five skandhas. When we simply live, we are not restricted by life, and

34. 'Buddha', here, refers to awakened Buddha Nature, the functioning of which is the subject of Hyakujō's remarks.

when we simply die, we are not put into turmoil by death. Do not uselessly crave life, and do not vainly fear death. They are both simply places where Buddha Nature resides. To be constantly disturbed and worn out over them is non-Buddhist behavior. To acknowledge the various conditions and circumstances that arise before our very eyes is the way to be unhindered in one's dealing with them. This is the Ultimate Vehicle: it is to be Buddha. Wherever one may reside within this state of 'being Buddha' becomes a wondrous Pure Land.

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> Ōbaku was sitting in Nansen's Abbatical reception room,[35] when Nansen asked Ōbaku, "What do you think of the principle enunciated in the *Great Scripture on the Buddha's Parinirvana* that, if one trains oneself equally in meditative practice and in spiritual wisdom, one will clearly see one's Buddha Nature?"
>
> Ōbaku replied, "Within all the hours of the day, It does not depend on a single thing, so we have It right from the start."
>
> Nansen said, "You aren't saying this as the view of an elder monk, are you?"[36]
>
> Ōbaku replied, "I daren't say so."
>
> Nansen said, "Setting aside for the moment the matter of payment for your rice broth, to whom are you to return payment for your straw sandals?"
>
> Thereupon, Ōbaku remained silent.

'Training equally in meditative practices and spiritual wisdom' does not mean that, since training in meditative practices does not interfere with pursuing spiritual wisdom, Buddha Nature can be clearly seen when training in both equally. Rather, when we clearly see our Buddha Nature, then we will be training equally in meditation practice and spiritual wisdom. So Nansen stated, "What do you think of this principle?" This would be the same as saying, for instance, "Who is it that sees one's Buddha Nature clearly?" Or it can be stated by saying, "How about the principle that Buddha Nature's equal pursuit of both is what causes us to realize our Buddha Nature?"

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35. Ōbaku was a Dharma heir of Hyakujō; Hyakujō and Nansen, as Dharma heirs of Baso, were monastic brothers.

36. The term 'elder monk' refers to a monk of many years training who is recognized for his deep understanding of spiritual matters.

The point of Ōbaku's saying "Within all the hours of the day, It does not depend on a single thing" is that even though twenty-four hours exist within the span of a whole day, It is not dependent on them. Since Buddha Nature's not depending on a single thing extends over all the hours of a day, It can be clearly seen. As to this 'within all the hours of a day' of his, would you ask at what specific time It will show up or in what country? These twenty-four hours that we are speaking of, would they have to be a human being's twenty-four hour day? Or do they exist as a day in some other particular place? Or are they the kind of day that can occur for a while in Samantabhadra's* Silver Realm? Whether it be in this land or some other world, It does not depend on either. It is already within the twenty-four hours of any day and does not depend on anything.

Nansen's asking, "You aren't saying this as the view of an elder monk, are you?" is the same as asking, "You aren't saying that this is <u>your</u> view, are you?" Although Nansen asked whether this is the view of an elder monk, Ōbaku should not turn to Nansen and affirm that it is indeed his own view. Although the statement was appropriate, it did not apply to Ōbaku alone, because Ōbaku is not the only person who held this view, as the views of many elder monks make abundantly clear.

As to Ōbaku's replying, "I daren't say so," when someone in Sung China is asked whether he is capable of doing something, he uses this phrase, "I daren't say so," to acknowledge in a humble way his ability to do so. Thus, to say, "I daren't say so," does not mean that one doubts one's abilities. What this expression says is not to be taken literally. Whether 'the view of an elder monk' refers to some other elder monk or whether 'the view of an elder monk' refers to Ōbaku, in either case the answer should be that he daren't say so. It should be like a water buffalo coming out from the water and bellowing *"Mu."*[37] To put it like this is to affirm It. You should try and see if you can say, in your own words, the Principle that Ōbaku is affirming.

Nansen said, "Setting aside for the moment the matter of payment for your rice broth, to whom are you to return payment for your straw sandals?" In other words, the cost of your rice gruel is put aside for the moment, but who gets paid for the cost of your straw sandals? We should spend life after life exploring the intent of this statement through our training. We should keep our minds diligently investigating what he meant by 'whatever the cost of the broth, don't worry about it for the moment'. Why was he so concerned about the cost of straw sandals? It is as if he had asked, "In all the years that you have spent traveling as a mendicant

37. Dōgen will explain the significance of this term later in this discourse when he discusses the kōan story of Jōshū's dog.

monk, how many pairs of straw sandals have you worn out?" to which Ōbaku might answer, "If I had not paid back the cost, I would not still be wearing straw sandals," or, then again, he might reply, "Two or three pairs." Either way could be how he expressed the Matter. Each way would correspond to his intent.

The statement that Ōbaku thereupon remained silent simply means that he desisted from speaking. He did not remain silent because what he said was negated by Nansen, nor did he remain silent because he was negating what Nansen said. A patch-robed monk of true color is not like that. Keep in mind that silence speaks, just as laughter can wield a sword. This is Buddha Nature clearly seeing that there is enough gruel and enough rice.

In citing this story, Isan asked his disciple Kyōzan, "Don't you think this shows that Ōbaku was no match for Nansen?"

Kyōzan replied, "Not so. We should recognize that Ōbaku had the wherewithal to capture the tiger alive."

Isan said, "My disciple's perceptiveness has excelled itself in this."

What Isan was saying is, "Wasn't Ōbaku able to match Nansen?" Kyōzan said that Ōbaku had the wherewithal to capture the tiger alive. If he had already captured the tiger, he could probably have stroked the tiger on its head. To capture a tiger and to pet a tiger are to engage in two totally different things. Is clearly seeing Buddha Nature the same as opening the Eye? Is one's Buddha Nature seeing clearly the same as losing one's Eye? Quick, quick, speak! The perceptiveness of Buddha Nature excels Itself in this. As a result, It does not depend on half a thing or on its whole. Nor does It depend on hundreds of thousands of things or on hundreds of thousands of occasions. For this reason it can be said:

The snares and traps of passion are but a single face of It.
On no time within a day does It depend, nor is It outside of time;
Rather, It is like wisteria and kudzu entwined about a tree.
All within the universe and the universe itself are still bereft of words for It, you see.

A certain monk once asked Great Master Jōshū, "Does even a dog have Buddha Nature?"

We need to clarify the intent of this question. 'Dog' here means a dog.[38] He is not asking, "Can such a creature have Buddha Nature?" nor is he asking, "Can such a creature be devoid of Buddha Nature?" What he is really asking is, "Is even an iron man exploring the Way through his training?" Even though the trainee has made a mistake and his feelings of rancor and regret, which have become poisonous, are profound, still, even after thirty years it would be an improvement to see half a saintly person.[39]

Jōshū replied, "*(Mu)* No, it doesn't."

When we hear this expression, there are pathways that we need to investigate. The "no" by which Buddha Nature reveals Its identity will be expressed by this word. And the "no" by which the identity of a dog is revealed will also be expressed by this word. And the "no" of an onlooker's exclamation will also be expressed by this word.[40] There may come a day when that "no" of Jōshū's will simply be a word for grinding away at stones.

The monk then asked, "All sentient beings, without exception, have Buddha Nature, so how come a dog is devoid of It?"

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38. Even though *kou-tsu* (the Chinese word for 'dog') has often been understood in China and Japan as referring to an animal (as implied by a literal rendering of Dōgen's discourse), in both countries, 'dog' has long been used as a term for someone who is morally depraved ('a dog of a person'). In Buddhism, such persons were called *icchantika*, that is, those who were constant in their deliberate and wanton breakage of Precepts. Such persons were consequently thought to be devoid of Buddha Nature. Further, 'dog' was also sometimes used in both countries as a humbling term for oneself ('a dog of a person like me'), someone who is doggedly devoted. There is apparently an interplay of all three meanings in the following passages.

39. That is, the intent behind the monk's question is as if he were asking, "I have truly tried to train with an iron will, but I have not yet realized the Truth. Is it because a dog of a trainee like me is somehow spiritually defective?" Dōgen's comment is that even if someone's training is being poisoned by feelings of regret at not yet having realized the Truth, still, asking the question in the first place is itself a sign of spiritual progress (being a half-saintly person), even if the person has not yet awakened to his True Nature after thirty years of training.

40. That is, the word 'no' has different meanings, depending on what it relates to. In the context of Buddha Nature, it means 'being beyond having or not having'; in the context of a dog, it means 'not possessing a Buddha Nature'; and in the context of a bystander, it means "There is nothing there that I can see."

The import of his question is as though he were saying, "If all sentient beings did not exist, then Buddha Nature would not exist and a dog would not exist. How about that point? How could you expect a dog not to have Buddha Nature?"

> Jōshū responded, "On the grounds that such a one has karmic ignorance."[41]

The meaning of what he said is that even though the reason for its existence is karmic ignorance, and its having karmic ignorance is the grounds for its existence, a dog does not possess karmic ignorance, nor does Buddha Nature possess it. Karmic ignorance has never understood what a dog really is, so how could a dog possibly encounter Buddha Nature? Whether Jōshū were to confirm or contradict what the monk said, still, this is a case of karmic ignorance on the monk's part from beginning to end.

> Jōshū had another monk who asked him, "Does Buddha Nature exist even in a dog, yes or no?"[42]

This question may have been the reason why this monk was a match for Jōshū,[43] since expressing or asking about Buddha Nature is the everyday food and drink of Buddhas and Ancestors.

> Jōshū said, "*(U)* Yes, It exists."

The nature of this 'It exists' is beyond the 'existence' as understood by the commentators of the various scholastic traditions, and beyond the assertion of existence made by the Sarvastivādins.[44] Advancing on from them, we should investigate what the existence of Buddha is. The existence of Buddha is Jōshū's "It exists," and Jōshū's "It exists" is the dog's existing, and the dog's existing is the existence of Buddha Nature.

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41. Karmic ignorance may be defined as the deluded state of consciousness that was inherited at birth from past lives and which inhibits one from seeing Buddha Nature.

42. In the original text, the wording of this question is the same as that used by the preceding monk, but the intent is different, as the subsequent comments by Jōshū and Dōgen make clear.

43. The implication of this statement is that the previous monk had asked the question from the perspective of one who had not yet realized his True Nature, whereas this monk had already had such a realization and was exploring True Nature with his Master.

44. The Sarvastivādins were members of one of the twenty pre-Mahayana schools of Indian Buddhism, which arose some three centuries after the death of Shakyamuni. One of their doctrines was that past, present, and future time all have real existence and that the Dharma is ever-present.

> The monk then asked, "If It already exists, why is It strongly impelled to enter into this body of flesh?"

This monk's question is asking, "Is It something existing now, or is It something that existed at some time in the past, or has It always existed?" Even though That Which Always Exists resembles other types of existence, That Which Always Exists clearly stands alone.

Is That Which Always Exists strongly impelled to enter into fleshly form or is It not? Although we have been strongly impelled to take on this fleshly body of ours, in our daily conduct and spiritual practice there is no bumbling, useless effort.

> Jōshū replied, "It is because a dog knowingly and intentionally breaks Precepts."

Even though this statement had long been spread abroad as a common saying, it was now Jōshū's way of putting the Matter.[45] What he is talking about is the deliberate breaking of Precepts. Probably very few people have not had doubts about this expression of his, because it is difficult for them to clearly understand the character for 'enter into', which is part of the phrase 'impelled to enter into'. However, this character for 'enter into' is not essential.[46]

Moreover, as Sekitō Kisen put it in a poem:

> *If you would know the Undying One within the hermit's hut,*
> *How can you do it apart from your fleshly body here and now?*

Even though we may not yet know who the Undying One is, when, pray, are we to separate It from our fleshly body? Having broken a Precept is not necessarily what impels us to enter a body of flesh, nor is our impulse to enter this fleshly body of ours necessarily due to our knowingly having broken a Precept. When such an action is done deliberately, then the Precept will be broken. You need to realize that this breaking of Precepts will be hidden from sight within our daily conduct and spiritual practice of dropping off body. This is expressed as 'being impelled to enter'. When our daily conduct and spiritual practice of dropping off body is genuinely hidden from sight, it will be concealed from both ourselves and others.

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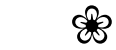
45. That is, the popular understanding of the statement was that if someone, knowing better, deliberately broke Precepts, that person would be reborn as an animal.

46. The phrase 'being impelled to enter into' is comprised of two characters: the first *(tō)* means 'to be impelled', the second (*nyū*) means 'to enter into'. Dōgen's point is that the 'enter into' is unessential, since it is difficult to see a clear distinction between 'to be impelled to take on some bodily form' and 'to be impelled to enter into taking on some bodily form'.

Even so, do not say that you are not yet free, that you are just a fellow with a donkey in front of him and a horse behind him.[47]

Even more, as our lofty Ancestor Ungo Dōyō said, "Even though you may have studied the Buddha Dharma to Its very limits, you have erred in your approach if you have completely depended on your intellect." Accordingly, even though someone has made this error for a long time, piling up the days and months by half-learning the Buddha Dharma to Its limits, such a person must be a dog who has been impelled to enter into that fleshly body of his. Although he knowingly has broken Precepts, he will still have Buddha Nature.



In the assembly of the virtuous monk Chōsa Keishin, his lay disciple Chiku, who was a high government official, raised a question, saying, "When a live earthworm is cut in two, both parts continue to move. I wonder, in which part does the Buddha Nature reside?"

The Master responded, "Do not engage in deluded, dualistic thinking."

The official asked, "But how do you account for the twitching?"

The Master replied, "It is simply that the elements of wind and fire have not yet dissipated."

Now, when the government official remarked about an earthworm being cut in two, had he concluded that, prior to its being cut, it was one segment of Buddha Nature? This is not the way things are viewed within the everyday experience of the Buddhas and Ancestors. The earthworm was not originally one segment of It, and, after being cut, the earthworm was not two segments of It. The assertion of 'one' and 'two' needs to be diligently explored through one's training and practice. As to the 'two parts' in his saying that both parts continue to move, did he take the worm before it had been cut to be one part of Buddha Nature, and did he take That which goes beyond awakening to be one part of the worm? Regardless of how the government official may have understood his phrase 'two parts', do not disregard the words he spoke. Is it that the two cut segments made up one whole and, moreover, that they exist as a whole being? The movement of which he spoke when saying that both continue to move will be the movement of one's meditative practice which loosens the roots of delusion and the movement of one's wise discernment which pulls these roots out.

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47. A Zen phrase for an ordinary person who has not yet realized enlightenment.

His statement, "I wonder, in which part does the Buddha Nature reside?" needs to be examined in detail. He should have said, "When someone cuts Buddha Nature in two, I wonder in which part does the earthworm reside?" In saying, "Both parts continue to move, so in which part does Buddha Nature reside?" does he mean that, if both are moving, it is not possible for Buddha Nature to reside in either? Or is he saying that, if both are moving, the place where Buddha Nature is residing must be in one or the other, even though both are moving?

When the Master responded, "Do not engage in deluded, dualistic thinking," what could he have meant by saying that his disciple should not engage in dualistic thinking? Did he mean that there is nothing dualistic about both parts moving, that the matter is beyond duality? Or did he simply mean that Buddha Nature is beyond duality? We should also investigate his statement that, simply, there is no duality, without getting into a discussion about 'Buddha Nature' or about 'two parts'.

As to the official's asking what we are to make of their twitching, is he asserting that because they are twitching, it must be due to their piling one Buddha Nature atop another, or is he asserting that even though they are twitching, it is apart from their Buddha Nature?

The Master's replying that it is simply a matter of the elements of wind and fire not yet having dissipated was his way of making Buddha Nature emerge. Is he saying that it is Buddha Nature or is he saying that it is wind and fire? He cannot say that Buddha Nature appears together with wind and fire, nor can he say that one appears but not the other, nor can he say that because there is wind and fire, there is Buddha Nature. Therefore, Chōsa did not say that an earthworm possesses Buddha Nature, nor did he say that an earthworm does not possess Buddha Nature. He simply stated that his disciple was not to engage in dualistic thinking and that the wind and fire had not yet dissipated. When it comes to the living reality of Buddha Nature, we should make Chōsa's words our way of thinking about It.

The phrase 'wind and fire have not yet dissipated' needs calm and diligent consideration. What is the underlying meaning of 'not yet having dissipated'? In his saying that they have not yet dissipated, is he saying that although the wind and fire had arrived, the time for their dispersal had not yet arrived? By no means! His saying "Wind and fire have not yet dissipated" is a Buddha giving expression to the Dharma. The wind and fire's not yet having dispersed is Dharma expressing Buddha. The moment had arrived for giving voice to a single sound of the Dharma. It is a single sound of the Dharma being voiced, and it is the moment of Its arrival. The Dharma is a single sound, because It is the Dharma of the One Sound.

Further, to think that Buddha Nature exists only during the time of life and that It cannot exist during the time of death is to have heard very little and understood even less. The time of life is one of 'having Buddha Nature' and of 'not

having a Buddha Nature', and the time of death is one of 'having Buddha Nature' and of 'not having a Buddha Nature'. If there were any discussion of whether or not the wind and fire had dissipated, it would have to be a discussion of whether or not Buddha Nature had dissipated. Even the time of their dissipating will be a time when Buddha Nature exists and a time when a Buddha Nature does not exist. And even the time before they have dissipated will be a time in which they are possessed of Buddha Nature and a time in which they do not possess a Buddha Nature. At the same time, to erroneously suppose that Buddha Nature is present or not present depending on whether or not there is movement, or to suppose that It is or is not transcendent depending on whether or not one is conscious of It, or to suppose that It is or is not one's nature depending on whether or not one is aware of It is to be a non-Buddhist, someone who is outside the Way.

From time immemorial there have been many foolish people who have taken their consciousness to be Buddha Nature and who have taken themselves to be someone who has realized their Original Nature, which is enough to make one die laughing. Moreover, to put into words what Buddha Nature is without going so far as to wallow in the mud or get soaked with water, It is the tiles and stones for our walls and fences.[48]

When It is stated on an even loftier level, what could It possibly be, this Buddha Nature? Have you really grasped It yet, in detail? It is having three heads and eight arms![49]

Delivered to the assembly on the fourteenth day of the tenth lunar month in the second year of the Ninji era (November 18, 1241) at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple, Yamashiro Province.

Copied by me on the nineteenth day of the first lunar month in the fourth year of the same era (February 9, 1243).

Ejō

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48. 'Wallowing in the mud or getting soaked in water' is a common Zen phrase for going to whatever lengths are necessary to help a sentient being realize the Truth. 'Tiles and stones for our walls and fences' refers to the bits and pieces of our experiences which we use to construct our world.

49. An allusion to the guardian kings Achalanātha, the Steadfast Bodhisattva, and Rāgarāja, the Passionate Bodhisattva. The former is sometimes associated with the firm commitment of trainees to train until they have overcome all hindrances to realizing enlightenment as they persist in helping others to realize Truth. The latter has associations with a passionate desire to help all sentient beings realize Buddhahood.

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Translator's Addendum from Book One, Kōan 96 from Dōgen's Chinese *Shinji Shōbōgenzō*

Fuke and Rinzai were at the house of a donor for an alms meal.[50] Rinzai remarked, "It is said that a hair swallows up the vast ocean and that a mustard seed contains all of Mount Sumeru. Does this refer to someone's wondrous use of spiritual abilities, or does this refer to all things having Original Nature?" At this, Fuke knocked Rinzai's seat out from under him.[51] Rinzai said in rebuke, "Clumsy ox!" Fuke said, "Right here is where the What is, whether the Matter is put clumsily or delicately." At this, Rinzai, abashed, retired from the room.

The next day, the two were visiting the same family for an alms meal. Rinzai asked Fuke, "Is today's offering the same as yesterday's?" Fuke again knocked Rinzai's seat out from under him. Rinzai said reproachfully, "Clumsy ox!" Fuke replied, "O you with your eyes closed, would you care to expound on the clumsiness or delicacy of the What in the Buddha Dharma?" Rinzai, thereupon, stuck out his tongue at Fuke and 'blew him a raspberry'.

50. Fuke and Rinzai were training together at the same temple, and Fuke was the more senior of the two monks. They shared a common ancestor in Baso.

51. Rinzai's question is not only erudite in nature but it is inappropriate during an alms meal, since such alms were given to a monk with the understanding that they were to support a monk's spiritual training, not to foster intellectual pursuits.

22

On the Everyday Behavior of a Buddha Doing His Practice

(Gyōbutsu Iigi)

Translator's Introduction: The term *iigi*, which in common parlance may be literally rendered as 'dignified behavior', refers specifically in Buddhism to the four modes of everyday human bodily behavior: moving, standing still, sitting, and reclining.

In a later section of this discourse, Dōgen takes up an exchange between Meditation Master Seppō Gison and his disciple Gensha Shibi, who was his Dharma heir. The relationship between these two monks is illustrative of what is called the vertical and horizontal relationship of Master and Transmitted disciple: on one level, Seppō remains Shibi's monastic senior, and on another, the two are on equal footing. While this relationship would hold true for Masters and their disciples in general, in this case it extended to the point where the two monks shared the Abbotship and Dharma seat of their temple. What one said was then expressed by the other as another way of putting the matter or as an expansion upon the theme of the first. At times, Dōgen seems to find Shibi's statement to be lacking in some sense, but this may have been his way of illustrating the horizontal and vertical aspects of the Master-disciple relationship in which the two are equal while, at the same time, the Master is the disciple's senior.

All Buddhas, without exception, make full use of Their everyday behavior for Their practice. This is what is meant by 'a Buddha doing His practice'. 'A Buddha doing His practice' does not refer to a Buddha's realizing enlightenment or to a Buddha's transforming Himself for the sake of helping others. Nor does it refer to a Buddha as the embodiment of the Dharma or to a Buddha as others see Him embodied. It is beyond the state of a Buddha at His initial realization or at His fundamental realization, and it is beyond the state of a Buddha in His inherent enlightenment or in His going 'beyond being enlightened'. A Buddha who is equivalent to any of these can never stand shoulder-to-shoulder with a Buddha who is doing His practice. Keep in mind that Buddhas, being within the Buddha's Way, do not go looking for realization. Becoming proficient in one's daily conduct whilst on the path towards Buddhahood is what is meant by 'a Buddha just doing His practice'. It is not something that is even dreamt of by those who are, say, Buddhas as embodiments of the Dharma.

Because this Buddha who is doing His practice manifests the four modes of behavior in everything He does, He manifests these modes right out in the open. Before He speaks, He gives a hint of His spiritual activity, which is woven into

whatever He does. This activity goes beyond time, or place, or 'being Buddha', or 'doing some practice'. If you are not a Buddha doing your practice, you will not let go of your attachment to 'Buddha' or your attachment to 'Dharma', and you will be grouped with those poor devils who deny that Buddha and Dharma can be found within themselves.

What being attached to 'Buddha' means is that a person has formed an intellectual concept of 'enlightenment' and then becomes attached to this concept and his understanding of it. Because this view accompanies him through each moment, he does not look for an opportunity to let go of this concept and understanding, and so he uselessly holds onto his mistaken views. On the other hand, to view and explain enlightenment as 'just being enlightenment' may well be a perspective that accords with enlightenment, for who could call this a false view? I recall my own indulgence in conceptualization as my tying myself up without a rope. It was a fetter at every moment, for the tree of self had not fallen and the wisteria vines of my entanglements had not withered away. This was simply my passing through life whilst meaninglessly imprisoned in a cave of ignorance on the periphery of Buddhism. I did not realize that my Dharma Body was ill nor did I recognize that my Reward Body was in distress.[1]

Those in the various Buddhist doctrinal schools, who are academic teachers of Scriptures or erudite commentators and the like, have heard what the Buddha said as if from afar, and have remarked, as did one of the Tendai Masters, that even though there is the Ultimate Nature of things, to set up some theory as to that Ultimate Nature is the very darkness of karmic* ignorance. In saying this, the Tendai Master failed to add that when a theory on the ultimate nature of things arises within Ultimate Nature, this 'ultimate nature of things' is a fetter. Further, he has added the fetter of ignorance atop this. Even though, sad to say, the Master did not recognize the fetter of 'the ultimate nature of things', one's ability to recognize the addition of the fetter of ignorance can become the seed for the mind's giving rise to the aspiration to realize enlightenment.

Now, a Buddha doing His practice has never been fettered with entanglements like this. This is why Shakyamuni Buddha said in the *Lotus Scripture*, "The lifetime which I obtained by My practice of the Bodhisattva* Path

1. This is a reference to the three Bodies of the Buddha *(Trikaya)*. The first is the Truth Body *(Dharmakaya),* which represents Absolute Truth or Buddha Mind Itself. The Reward Body *(Sambhogakaya)* represents the blissful reward of Buddhist training. The third is the Transformation Body *(Nirmanakaya)*, which is the physical body of the Buddha as it appears in the world.

* See *Glossary.*

from the start is not exhausted even now, and will still be twice the past number of eons." You need to recognize that this does not mean that His lifetime as a bodhisattva was strung out in a continuous line to the present, nor does it mean that the life span of the Buddha was ever-present in the past. The 'past number' of which He spoke refers to all that He had accomplished up to that point. The 'even now' that He refers to is the whole of His life span. Even though His practice from the start has been as continuous and unvarying as an iron rail extending over ten thousand miles, yet, at the same time, it is His letting go of things for hundreds of years and His letting things be what they are, wherever they are.

As a consequence, doing one's training and realizing the Truth are beyond a matter of existing or not existing, for training and realizing the Truth are beyond any stain. There are hundreds of thousands of myriad places where there are no Buddhas or human beings, yet this does not sully a Buddha who is doing His practice. Thus it is that someone who does the practice of a Buddha is not sullied by notions of 'doing one's training' or 'realizing the Truth'. This does not mean that one's training to realize the Truth is necessarily untainted. And, at the same time, this state of 'being untainted' really does exist.

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As Enō of Mount Sōkei once said to his disciple Nangaku:

> This Immaculacy is simply what all Buddhas protect and keep in mind. It is the same for you too, and it is the same for me too. And it is the same for all our Indian Ancestors too.

So, because you are also like this, you are all the Buddhas, and because I am also like this, I am all the Buddhas. Truly, It is beyond 'me' and beyond 'you'. Within this Immaculacy, the me that is the real Me—which all the Buddhas protect and keep in mind—is what the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing His practice is, and the you that is the real You—which all the Buddhas protect and keep in mind—is what the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing His practice is. Due to the 'me too', Enō's everyday behavior is what constituted his excellence as a Master, and due to the 'you too', Nangaku's everyday behavior is what constituted his strength as a disciple, because the excellence of a Master and the strength of a disciple are what comprise the perfect knowledge and conduct of a Buddha doing His practice. You need to realize that what we call 'what is protected and kept in mind by all Buddhas' is 'me too' and 'you too'. Even though the explanation by the former Buddha of Mount Sōkei is beyond 'me', how could it possibly not refer to 'you'? What is protected and kept in mind by Buddhas who are doing Their

practice is no different from That which thoroughly penetrates a Buddha who is doing His practice.

From the preceding it should be evident that doing one's training and realizing the Truth are beyond such things as one's innate nature and the forms it takes, or what is the root is and what the branches are. In that the mental attitude of a Buddha doing His training is, as might be expected, what causes a Buddha to train, Buddhas willingly train Themselves accordingly. There are those who put aside their body for the sake of the Teaching as well as those who put aside the Teaching for the sake of their body, and there are those who do not begrudge their own lives as well as those who do begrudge their own lives. And not only are there instances of putting aside 'Dharma' for the sake of the Dharma, there is also the everyday behavior in which someone may put aside the 'Teaching' for the sake of his Mind. Do not lose sight of the fact that the ways of letting go are incalculable. We cannot gauge or measure the Great Way by using what some Buddha may think about. The thoughts of any Buddha represent but a single angle: they are, for instance, like the opening of one flower. Do not use just your discriminative mind to grope about for what everyday behavior is or how to put it in words. The discriminative mind is but one aspect: it is, for instance, like a single realm. Considering a blade of grass is clearly what the discriminative mind of the Buddhas and Ancestors considers.[2] This is one means by which a Buddha doing His training comes to recognize the traces of His footsteps. Even if, by our wholehearted consideration, we clearly see that our understanding of 'what a Buddha is' is beyond fathoming, when we focus on the bodily behavior and demeanor of a Buddha doing His practice—whether He is moving or still—His behavior and demeanor will fundamentally have features that surpass our present understanding. Because it is His daily conduct that surpasses our fathoming, we cannot compare it or apply it to anyone else, for it is beyond anything that we can gauge or measure.

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Now, there is something that we need to investigate in the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing His practice. True, the everyday behavior of 'me too' and 'you too' is connected with the innate capabilities of 'I alone' in regards to one's having come the way one has, both as a Buddha here and now and as oneself here and now. Nevertheless, this everyday behavior <u>is</u> the state of liberation associated with

2. The 'discriminative' mind here refers to the discerning, non-judgmental functioning of the mind of Buddhas and Ancestors. The 'discriminatory' mind is used to describe the judgmental mind, which recognizes differences and then adds a value judgment to them.

the Buddhas in the ten directions and is not simply one's identification with that state. This is why a former Buddha said, "Having comprehended the Matter* in abstract terms, we come back to the here and now where we conduct our daily living." When we maintain and rely upon the Matter in this way, all things, all beings, all practices, and all Buddhas are familiar to us and are our kindly friends.

Simply, each and every one of the Buddhas who physically put the Dharma into practice had obstructions to Their directly experiencing the Truth. Because there are obstructions to one's directly experiencing the Truth, there will be liberation in one's directly experiencing the Truth. When the hundreds of thoughts and things sprout up like grass blades before your eyes in such a bewildering way that they impede your sight, do not be dismayed that you cannot discern even a single thought or a single object. They are simply what is manifesting in this thought and what is manifesting in that thing. No matter what we 'pick up' or 'haul away' as we busy ourselves with entering and departing through the gates of our senses each day, nothing anywhere has ever been hidden from us, and, as a result, the Venerable Shakyamuni's words, and realization, and practices, and Transmission, though unheard and unseen, are ever present.

Whenever I go out the gates, just grass,
And whenever I come in the gates, just grass,
So for a myriad leagues
There is not even an inch of grass.

And the words 'come in'
And the words 'go out'
Do not apply here
Nor do they apply there.[3]

Whatever thoughts or things we are now grasping and clinging to as 'real' are not supported by our practice of letting go, and yet they are our dreams and illusions, our 'flowers in the sky'. Who of us can see as mistaken these persistent dreams and illusions, these manufactured 'flowers in the sky'? Because to step forth is a mistake and to step back is a mistake, because taking one step is a mistake and

3. To paraphrase this poem, whenever I look either outside or within myself, there are only the transient images that my senses perceive and which my mind gives substance to. Hence, all there is in any experience is what I describe as arising, temporarily persisting, and dissipating, and that is of my own constructing. In this sense, the 'myriad blades of grass' are not real, no matter how far I travel within or without. And since there is no 'I' that 'goes out' or 'comes in', these terms are useless in describing or directly knowing That Which Is Real.

taking two steps is a mistake, we make one mistake after another, for we have made Heaven and Earth strangers to each other. The Way to the Ultimate is not hard.[4] As for our dignity in these comings and goings, we should take as our ideal in our everyday behavior Sōsan's line, "The Great Way is being naturally at ease within ourselves."

We need to keep in mind that our coming forth into life is at one with our coming forth into the Way and that our entering death is at one with our entering the Way. In the head-to-tail rightness of that state, our everyday behavior manifests before our very eyes as if the turning of a jewel or the revolving of a pearl. To make use of, and be possessed of, one aspect of a Buddha's everyday behavior is to be the whole of the great earth in all directions, as well as the whole of birth-and-death and coming-and-going; it is to be a dust-filled mundane world and to be a lotus in full bloom. This dust-filled mundane world and this lotus blossom are each an aspect of It.

Many scholars are of the opinion that to speak of the whole of the great earth in all directions may refer to the southern continent of Jambudvipa* or to the four continents, whereas some cling to the notion that it is just the single nation of China, or go around in circles thinking that it is the single nation of Japan. Furthermore, just to say the words 'the whole of the great earth' is like thinking of it as the three-thousand great-thousandfold worlds, or like holding onto the notion of it as just one province or one district. Were you to undertake to explore the phrase 'the whole of the great earth' or 'the whole of the universe' through your training, you would need to mull it over three or four times, and do not conclude that such phrases are simply concerned with the breadth of something. This realization of the Way goes beyond 'Buddha' and transcends 'Ancestor'. It is that which is extremely large being the same as that which is small, and that which is extremely small being the same as that which is large. Even though this resembles the dubious statement that when 'large' does not exist, 'small' does not exist, it is nevertheless synonymous with a Buddha doing His practice as His everyday behavior. What Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor have All

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4. Dōgen is alluding to lines from the poem "That Which Is Engraved upon the Heart That Trusts to the Eternal" by Kanchi Sōsan:

> *The Way to the Ultimate is not hard;*
> *Simply give up being picky and choosey...*
> *Let but a hair's breadth of discriminatory thought arise*
> *And you have made Heaven and Earth strangers to each other.*

One translation of the full poem can be found in *Buddhist Writings on Meditation and Daily Practice,* (Shasta Abbey Press, 1994), pp. 213-221.

affirmed is the everyday behavior of the whole universe. This should be explored by you through your training as 'nothing ever having been hidden from you'. Not only has nothing ever been hidden from you, the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing His practice is His 'making tea' for everyone.

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Even though there are those who, in giving voice to the Buddha's Way, may state that being born from the womb, say, or being born by transformation is a daily occurrence on the way to Buddhahood, such persons have still not stated that one may also be born from moisture or from an egg. And what is more, they have not even dreamt of there being birth beyond those from womb, egg, moisture, or transformation. How much less could they possibly experience and perceive that beyond birth from womb, egg, moisture, or transformation there is birth from Womb, Egg, Moisture, or Transformation? Now, according to the great words of Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor, there is a Womb, a Moisture, an Egg, and a Transformation that is beyond birth from womb, egg, moisture, or transformation, which They have correctly Transmitted as 'nothing ever having been hidden', and They have correctly Transmitted this Truth privately and in secret. How are we to categorize that bunch who most likely have not heard of this expression, much less have they learned about it, or understood it, or clarified what it means? You have already heard about the four types of birth, but how many types of death are there? For the four types of birth, could there be four types of death? Or could there be only two or three types of death? Or could there be five or six types, or a thousand or myriad types of death? Even entertaining a bit of doubt about this principle is part of exploring the Matter through training with one's Master.

Let's consider this for the moment. Can there be any kind of sentient being sprung from one of the four types of birth who experiences birth but does not experience death? And are there any to whom the direct, one-to-one, Transmission of death has been given who have not received the direct, one-to-one, Transmission of life? You should by all means explore through your training whether there is any kind of being who is only born or who only dies.

There are those who hear the phrase 'that which is beyond birth' without ever clarifying what it means, acting as if they didn't need to make any effort with their body and mind. This is a dullard's foolishness in the extreme. They must be some kind of beast who has not even reached the level of discussing the gradual awakening of one who practices with faith and the sudden awakening of one who quickly grasps the Dharma. If you ask why, the reason is that even if they hear the

phrase ‘that which is beyond birth’, they still need to explore what the intent of this statement is. Further, they make no effort to inquire into what ‘beyond Buddha’, ‘beyond the Way’, ‘beyond mind’, and ‘beyond annihilation’ might mean, or what ‘being beyond that which is beyond birth’ might mean, or what ‘beyond the realm of thoughts and things’ and ‘beyond one’s Original Nature’ might mean, or what ‘beyond death’ might mean. This is because they sit idly by, like creatures that live in the water or in the vegetation.

Keep in mind that ‘birth-and-death’ refers to our daily conduct in the Buddha’s Way, and that ‘birth-and-death’ is one of the everyday tools in our Buddhist tradition. It is something that we use skillfully and by which we gain skillfulness; it is something that we clarify and by which we gain clarity. As a consequence, all Buddhas are completely clear and bright within the free functioning of this ‘birth-and-death’, and They are completely purposeful in Their making use of it. Should any of you be in the dark about the times when this ‘birth-and-death’ occurs, who could say who your ‘you’ really is? Who would describe you as someone who fully understands what life is and who has mastered what death is? Such people as these cannot hear that they have sunk deep, drowning in ‘birth-and-death’, and also cannot comprehend that they exist within ‘birth-and-death’. They cannot believe and accept that ‘birth-and-death’ means being born and dying at each instant, nor can they plead that they do not understand it or that they do not know it.

On the other hand, some have fancied that Buddhas emerge only in the human world and that They do not manifest in other places or in other worlds.[5] If it were as they say, would all the places where a Buddha was present have to be part of the human world? This is their inference from the human Buddha’s statement, “I, and I alone, am the Honored One.” Well, there can also be celestial Buddhas, as well as Buddha Buddhas.[6] To assert that all Buddhas have manifested solely as human beings is not to have entered into the innermost sanctuary of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

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An Ancestor of our lineage once said, “After Shakyamuni Buddha received the Transmission of the True Teaching from Kashō Buddha, He went to the Tushita Heaven, where He is now residing, instructing the celestial inhabitants

5. The worlds referred to here are the six worlds of existence into which a sentient being may be reborn.

6. Celestial Buddhas exist in the celestial world, whereas Buddha Buddhas exist in a realm beyond the six worlds of existence.

there.” Truly, you need to realize that even though the human Shakyamuni had, by that time, taught about His future extinction, nevertheless, the Shakyamuni who was in a heavenly world is still there even now, teaching celestial beings. You who are undertaking this training should know that the remarks and actions of the human Shakyamuni underwent a thousand changes and myriad transformations. What He gave expression to when He let His light shine forth and manifested auspicious signs was but one aspect of His being a human being. We should not foolishly fail to realize that the Teaching of the Shakyamuni in the Tushita Heaven may also be of a thousand kinds and produce myriad gateways. The Great Way which Buddha after Buddha has correctly Transmitted transcends extinction, and the underlying principle that one lets go of ‘being beyond both beginning and ending’ has been correctly Transmitted by the Buddha’s Way, and by It alone. This is a meritorious behavior of the Buddha that others do not necessarily comprehend or even hear about.

In places where a Buddha doing His practice is establishing the Teaching, there may be sentient beings who are beyond the four types of birth, and there may be places that are beyond the celestial worlds, beyond the world of ordinary human beings, beyond the world of mental objects, and the like. Whenever you attempt to catch a glimpse of the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing His practice, do not use the eyes of someone in a celestial world or in the world of ordinary human beings, and do not employ the discriminatory thinking of someone in a celestial world or in the world of ordinary human beings, and do not aim at fathoming a Buddha’s everyday behavior by trying to measure it. The ‘thrice wise and ten times saintly’* do not recognize it and have not clarified what it is, so how much less would the calculations of ordinary human beings and those in celestial worlds reach it! In that the discriminatory thinking of human beings is narrow in scope, so their sense-based intellects are also narrow in scope, and in that their life span is limited and urgent, what they concern themselves with is also limited and urgent. So, how could they possibly fathom the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing His practice?

Therefore, do not count as disciples of the Buddha those in lineages that only take the world of ordinary human beings to be the realm of a Buddha or that narrow-mindedly take the ways of ordinary human beings to be the ways of a Buddha, for they are nothing more than human beings living out the result of past karma. Neither their body nor their mind has yet heard the Dharma, and they do not yet possess a body and mind that practices the Way. They do not live in accord with the Dharma or die in accord with the Dharma, nor do they see in accord with the Dharma or hear in accord with the Dharma, and they do not move, stand, sit, or recline in accord with the Dharma. Folks like this have never experienced the

enriching benefits of the Dharma. They go around asserting such 'principles' as "A Buddha doing His practice is not related to His innate state of enlightenment or to His first awakening to that enlightened state" and "He is beyond 'having realized or not having realized enlightenment.'"

Now, such notions as 'thinking' and 'not thinking', 'having realized enlightenment' and 'not having realized enlightenment', and 'awakening to enlightenment' and 'being innately enlightened', which common, worldly-minded people are avidly concerned with, are simply the avid concerns of common, worldly-minded people, for they are not what Buddha after Buddha has received and passed on. Do not make comparisons between the thinking of common, worldly-minded people and the thinking of the Buddhas, for they are vastly different. Common, worldly people's being avidly concerned with their innate enlightenment and all the Buddhas' actually realizing Their innate enlightenment are as different from each other as heaven and earth, for innate enlightenment is something beyond the reach of comparative discussions. The avid concerns of the thrice wise and ten times saintly have still not reached the Way of the Buddhas. How could the useless, 'grain by grain' calculations of common, worldly people possibly yield the measure of It? Even so, many are the folks who avidly concern themselves with false views on cause and effect and on ends and means, views which are held by common, worldly people and others who are outside the Way—and they suppose these views to be within the bounds of the Buddha's Teachings. All the Buddhas have asserted that the roots of wrong-doing of these folks are deep and serious, and that such persons are to be pitied. And even though the deep and serious roots of their wrong-doing know no bounds, they are a heavy burden which these folks themselves must bear. They should just let go of this heavy burden, fix their gaze upon it, and look at it. And even though they may later take it up again and obstruct themselves with it, this burden will not then be the same as when it first arose.

Now, the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing His practice is unobstructed. And to the extent that He is constrained by being a Buddha due to His having thoroughly mastered the path of 'dragging oneself through mud and drowning oneself in water for the sake of others', He is still beyond hindrances and obstructions. When in some lofty realm, He gives instruction for the lofty, and when in the world of ordinary human beings, He gives instruction for ordinary people. There is benefit in both the blossoming of a single flower and in the blossoming forth of the whole world, without there being even the slightest gap between them. As a result, He goes far beyond self and other, and there is a unique excellence in His comings and goings. He goes to the Tushita Heaven here and now, and He comes from the Tushita Heaven here and now, and His very here and

now is the Tushita Heaven. He is content in His goings here and now, and He is content in His comings here and now, and His very here and now is His contentment. He goes far beyond the Tushita Heaven here and now, and He goes far beyond contentment here and now. He smashes to hundreds of bits both His contentment and the Tushita Heaven here and now, and He picks up and lets go of both His contentment and the Tushita Heaven here and now. He swallows both of them whole in one gulp.

Keep in mind that what we call 'contentment' and the 'Tushita Heaven' are also spinning on the wheel of the six worlds* of existence, as are both the Pure Lands and the various Heavens. His daily activities are likewise the daily activities of the Pure Lands and the various Heavens. When He is greatly awake, they are likewise greatly awake. When He is greatly deluded, they are likewise greatly deluded. All this is simply a Buddha, when doing His practice, wriggling His toes in His straw sandals. There are times when His singular way of putting the Matter will be the sound from His breaking wind or the smell from His emptying His bowels. Those with Nostrils will get a whiff of It.[7] They catch It through the sense fields of their ears, their bodies, and their actions. And there are times when they get my very Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow. And It is also something that we realize through our practice and which cannot be obtained from someone else.

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When someone already has a broad and thorough grasp of the Great Way by understanding what life is and mastering what death is, that great saintly one leaves the matter of birth-and-death to the mind, and leaves the matter of birth-and-death to the body, and leaves the matter of birth-and-death to the Way, and leaves the matter of birth-and-death to birth and death. Although awareness of this principle is not something belonging to either the past or the present, yet, even so, the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing His practice is instantly practiced to the full. He immediately discerns and complies with the principle that the Way is an endless cycle, with body and mind continually arising and dying away. His practicing to the full and His illumining the Matter to the full are in no way forced actions, but greatly resemble what we do when our mind has wandered off into delusion: that is, when we observe the shadows in our mind, we then turn the light of our mind around to reflect on what we truly are. This brightness, which is a brightness

7. 'Those with Nostrils' is a common Zen Buddhist term for those who are able to go beyond surface appearances to 'sniff out' the deeper, spiritual meaning behind an action done by someone who has awakened to the Truth.

beyond brightness, thoroughly permeates a Buddha doing His practice, and it manifests naturally within His actions.

To grasp this principle of 'one's continually leaving it up to', you must thoroughly explore what your mind is. In the unswerving stillness of this exploration, you will come to understand and recognize that the myriad turnings and shiftings within your mind are due to the brightness and openness of your mind, and that the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form are simply great barriers within the mind. Also, even though what one has come to understand and recognize are simply the myriad thoughts and things that arise, this in itself has put into action 'the homeland of our True Self' and is the same the living experience of 'such a person'* being 'just the thing'.

Thus, in ferreting out again and again what we are to take to serve as our model from what the Masters and Scriptures say and what skills we should seek that lie outside their words, there will be a catching on that goes beyond 'catching on to', and there will be a letting go that goes beyond 'letting go of'. In such an undertaking, we need to ask ourselves what life really is. And what is death? And what is body and mind? And what is given and what is taken? And what is 'keeping true to' or 'violating'? Is it going in and out of the same gate without meeting 'such a one'? Or is it our concealing our body while letting just our horns show?[8] Or is it placing just one piece at a time on a *Go* game board and letting it lie there? Is it giving great consideration to the Matter until we resolve It? Or is it letting our thoughts mature until we realize It? Is It the One Bright Pearl? Or is It what the whole of the great Treasure House teaches? Is It the staff that supports an elderly monk? Or is It one's Face and Eye? Is It what comes after thirty years of training? Or is It ten thousand years within a single thought? We should examine these matters in detail and we should not overlook anything in our examination. When we do our examination in detail, our whole Eye hears sounds and our whole Ear sees forms and colors. And further, when a mendicant monk's single Eye is clearly open, the sounds, forms, and colors It sees will not be the thoughts and things before one's eyes. There will appear His gentle countenance breaking into a smile and His twinkling eyes. This is the ever-fleeting quality of the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing His practice. It is not a matter of 'being hauled about by things'; rather, it is a matter of 'not hauling things about'. It is beyond our notion of something being 'unborn and uncreated' which actually arises dependent upon causal conditions. And It is beyond our Original Nature and the Ultimate Nature of things. It is beyond our simply abiding in our place. And It is beyond the

8. This is a Zen Buddhist metaphor meaning that a person has implied more than they have actually said.

state of our Original Existence. It is not only our affirming that things are just as they are, it is simply being a Buddha doing His practice in His everyday behavior.

Accordingly, the living activities of creating things and creating a self are well left up to our mind to do. And the everyday behaviors of getting rid of 'life' and getting rid of 'death' have been entrusted for the time being to Buddha. This is why there is the saying, "The myriad thoughts and things are simply our mind, just as the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form are simply our mind." Also, when we express the situation from a higher perspective, there is 'simply our mind', that is, there are simply the tiles* and stones of our walls and fences. Because 'simply our mind' is not simply our mind, so 'the tiles and stones of our walls and fences' are not the tiles and stones of walls and fences. This is the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing His practice, and it is the principle of leaving things to the mind and leaving things to things even while we are creating both a mind and things.

Further, this goes beyond what is reached by someone's initial realization or by their fundamental realization, and the like, so how much less could it be reached by those outside the Way, or by those in the two Lesser Courses,* or by those who are thrice wise and ten times saintly! This everyday behavior is not understood by one person after another, and it is not understood in one situation after another. It is like, for instance, a fish darting through the water, for being active is also something that points the Matter out at every instant. Is it a single iron rod? Is it both parts moving?[9] The single iron rod is beyond being long or short: the two parts moving are beyond self and other. When you realize the fruits of your effort, which is your ability to hit the target through word or deed in response to your Master, then your majesty will envelop all the myriad things that arise, and your Eye will tower over the entire world. You will have a radiant brightness that goes beyond your mastery of letting go and holding back: this is the Monks' Hall, the Buddha Hall, the Temple Kitchen, and the Temple Gate. Further, you will have a radiant brightness unrelated to letting go and holding back: it is the Monks' Hall, the Buddha Hall, the Temple Kitchen, and the Temple Gate. And you will have an Eye that will penetrate everywhere in all ten directions, an Eye that takes in everything within the great earth. You will have a mind for the past and a mind for the future. Because the merit of this radiant brightness blazes up in eyes, ears, nose,

9. To paraphrase, is the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing His practice like a single iron rod, which is the same at any time or place? Or is His everyday behavior like a worm that has been cut in two? Since both parts of the worm are moving independently of each other, by analogy the Buddha's various behaviors would likewise seem to be independent of each other.

tongue, body, and mind, there are all the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds who maintain and rely upon Their not being known to exist, and there is the feral cat and the wild white ox who gamble on their being known to exist. When one has a ring for this ox's nose and also has the eyes for It, then the Dharma gives expression to a Buddha doing His practice and sanctions a practicing Buddha.[10]

In pointing out the Great Matter to his assembly, Seppō Gison once said, "The Buddhas in the three temporal worlds exist within the Blazing Fire, turning the Great Wheel of the Dharma."

His disciple Gensha Shibi added, "Since the Blazing Fire is giving voice to the Dharma for the sake of all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds, all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds listen to It right on the spot where They are."

Meditation Master Engo commented on what they said in verse:

We have Seppō, Monkey White well called,
Along with Shibi, Monkey Black.
Both together throw themselves into the moment at hand,
So that gods appear and demons vanish.

The Raging Fire spreading across the heavens is Buddha
giving voice to Truth;
The Raging Fire that spreads across the heavens is Truth
giving voice to Buddha.
The tangled nests of kudzu and wisteria vines are cut low
before Its wind.
One remark from Seppō and Shibi, and Vimalakīrti has*
been tested and bested.

'The Buddhas in the three temporal worlds' refers to all the Buddhas, each and every one of Them. The Buddhas doing Their practice, consequently, are the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds. Of all the Buddhas everywhere, there is not One who is not in the three temporal worlds. When the words and ways of a Buddha express the three temporal worlds, they are completely expressed in just

10. 'The feral cat and the wild white ox' refer to the untamed nature of those who are not doing Buddhist practice. Taming this nature is likened to inserting a ring in an ox's nose in order to train it, whereas recognizing that the purpose of that training is to realize our Buddha Nature is likened to having the eyes for it.

this manner. In our present inquiry into Buddhas doing Their practice, They are, accordingly, all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds. Even if we know that They exist, even if we do not know that They exist, They are, beyond doubt, all the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds and They are 'Buddhas doing Their practice'.

And at the same time, in expressing 'all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds', these three Old Buddhas—Seppō, Shibi, and Engo—each had their own way of putting the Matter. We need to learn the principle underlying what Seppō expressed as, "The Buddhas in the three temporal worlds exist within the Blazing Fire, turning the Great Wheel of the Dharma." The training ground for the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma by all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds is undoubtedly within the Blazing Fire: within the Blazing Fire is undoubtedly the training ground for Buddhas. Rigid teachers of Scripture and pedantic commentators cannot hear this, nor can non-Buddhists and those of the two Lesser Courses understand it. Be aware that the Blazing Fire of all the Buddhas will not be any other sort of fire. Also, you need to reflect upon whether any of those other sorts of fire are ablaze. You need to learn the teaching methods of our monastic tradition which are employed by the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds whilst They exist within the Blazing Fire. When They are present within the Blazing Fire, are the Blazing Fire and the Buddhas intimately connected? Or are the Two turning away from each other? Or are They one and the same both within and without?[11] Do They have a within and a without? Are Their within and without the same thing? Are Their within and without equally distant from each other?

Turning the Great Wheel of the Dharma will be the turning of oneself and the turning of the opportune moment at hand. It is one's ability to hit the target through word or deed in response to one's Master, which will include a turning of the Dharma and the Dharma's turning. This turning of the Great Wheel of the Dharma, which Seppō has already mentioned, encompasses a Dharma Wheel that is turning the Wheel of Fire, even though the whole of the great earth is already completely ablaze. And It will be a Dharma Wheel that sets all Buddhas in motion. It will be a Dharma Wheel that sets the Wheel of the Dharma in motion, and It will encompass a Dharma Wheel that sets the three temporal worlds in motion.

Thus it is that the Blazing Fire is the great training ground wherein all Buddhas turn the Great Wheel of the Dharma. To try to analyze and measure this by spatial thinking, temporal thinking, human thinking, ordinary thinking, or saintly thinking, and the like, is to miss the mark. Since It cannot be measured by

11. 'Within and without' translates a technical Buddhist term for what appears as the subjective 'inner world' and the objective 'outer world'.

those types of thinking, then, because It is the training ground for the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma by each and every Buddha of the three temporal worlds, and because the Blazing Fire exists, there is a training ground for Buddhas.

> Shibi remarked: "Since the Blazing Fire is giving voice to the Dharma for the sake of all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds, all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds listen to It right on the spot where They are."

Hearing these words, some may say that Shibi's remark states the Truth better than Seppō's remark, but this is not necessarily so. Keep in mind that Seppō's remark is separate from Shibi's remark. That is to say, Seppō is stating that the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds are turning the Great Wheel of the Dharma, whereas Shibi is stating that the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds are listening to the Dharma. Although Seppō's remark is undoubtedly stating that the Dharma is being set in motion, it is not the case that the Dharma's being set in motion necessarily involves the Dharma's being heard. As a consequence, we cannot take what Seppō is saying to mean that the Dharma that has been set in motion will necessarily involve the Dharma being heard. In fact, Seppō is not saying that the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds are giving expression to the Dharma for the sake of the Blazing Fire, nor is he saying that the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds are turning the Great Wheel of the Dharma for the sake of the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds, nor is he saying that the Blazing Fire is turning the Great Wheel of the Dharma for the sake of the Blazing Fire. Is there any difference between speaking of turning the Wheel of the Dharma and actually turning the Great Wheel of the Dharma? Setting the Wheel of the Dharma in motion is beyond any voicing of the Dharma, so will the voicing of the Dharma necessarily exist for the sake of others? Accordingly, Seppō's remark is one that does not fail to say what he meant to say.

As part of your training with your Master, you will certainly need to thoroughly explore Seppō's phrases 'being within the Blazing Fire' and 'turning the Great Wheel of the Dharma'. Do not confuse them with what Shibi is saying. To penetrate what Seppō is saying is to make as <u>your</u> everyday behavior the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing his practice. The Blazing Fire causes Itself to exist within all the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds. This is beyond Its simply permeating one or two inexhaustible realms of thoughts and things, and beyond Its merely permeating one or two motes of dust. In gauging the turning of the Great Wheel of the Dharma, do not liken It to measuring something as being large or small, broad or narrow. The Great Wheel of the Dharma does not turn for one's

own sake or for the sake of others, nor does It turn for the sake of giving voice to It or for the sake of hearing It.

Shibi's way of putting it is, "Since the Blazing Fire is giving voice to the Dharma for the sake of all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds, all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds listen to It right on the spot where They are." Even though this says that the Blazing Fire is giving voice to the Dharma for the sake of all Buddhas in the three temporal worlds, it does not go so far as to say that It sets the Wheel of the Dharma in motion, nor does it say that the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds set the Wheel of the Dharma in motion. And even though all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds listen to It right on the spot where They are, how could the Wheel of the Dharma of all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds possibly have set into motion the Blazing Fire? Does the Blazing Fire which voices the Dharma for the sake of all Buddhas in the three temporal worlds also turn the Great Wheel of the Dharma or not? Shibi also does not go so far as to say, "The Wheel of the Dharma is turning right now." Nor does he say, "There is no turning of the Wheel of the Dharma."

Be that as it may, we need to consider whether Shibi is confused and understands the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma to mean expounding on the Wheel of the Dharma. If that is the case, then he is still in the dark about Seppō's statement. Even though he would have understood that when the Blazing Fire voices the Dharma for the sake of the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds, all the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds listen to It right on the spot where They are, nevertheless, he would not have recognized that when the Blazing Fire turns the Wheel of the Dharma, the Blazing Fire also listens to It right on the spot. He does not say that when the Blazing Fire turns the Wheel of the Dharma, the Fire is blazing at the same time as It is turning the Wheel of the Dharma. Listening to the Dharma by the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds is the practice of all Buddhas; They are not influenced by anything else. So, do not regard the Blazing Fire as 'the Dharma', nor regard the Blazing Fire as 'a Buddha', nor regard the Blazing Fire as just a blazing fire. And, truly, do not make light of the remark by Master Seppō's disciple. Would what he said simply be a case of his having thought that 'Persians have red beards' when, in fact, it was the case that 'a Persian's beard is red'?[12]

Even though Shibi's remark may resemble these ways of looking at the Matter, there is something in it that you would do well to consider: namely, it reveals the strength you will need for exploring the Matter through your training. That is to say, you should explore through your training the Essential Nature and

12. The quoted phrases derive from a remark made by Hyakujō Ekai, alluding to two different ways of saying the same thing.

the transitory forms It takes, which Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor have accurately Transmitted. This is not connected with 'ultimate reality and its transitory forms' as worked out in the traditions of both the Mahayana* and the Lesser Courses by pedestrian teachers of Scriptures and commentaries. Shibi is describing the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds listening to the Dharma which, in the traditions of both the Mahayana and the Lesser Courses, is beyond 'ultimate reality and its transitory forms'. Such narrow-minded teachers only recognize that Buddhas have a way of voicing the Dharma that is limited to opportune occasions. They do not speak of all Buddhas listening to the Dharma, or speak of all Buddhas doing Their training and practice, or speak of all Buddhas realizing Buddhahood.

Now, Shibi has already stated, "All Buddhas in the three temporal worlds listen to the Dharma right on the spot where They are." This statement encompasses both the Essential Nature and the forms It takes in which all Buddhas listen to the Dharma. By all means, do not regard those who are able to give voice to It as being superior, and do not say that those who are listening carefully to the Dharma are inferior. If those who give voice to It are worthy of our respect, then those who listen to It are also worthy of our respect.

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Shakyamuni Buddha once said in verse:

If any people give voice to this Discourse
Then they will surely be able to see Me.
But to express It for the sake of even one person
Is indeed something difficult for them to do.

So it follows from this that to be able to express the Dharma is to see Shakyamuni Buddha because, when 'such a one' comes to see 'Me', he is Shakyamuni Buddha. The Buddha also said in verse:

After I am extinct,
To hear and accept this Discourse
And to inquire into Its meaning
Will indeed be difficult to do.

Keep in mind that hearing It and accepting It are also equally difficult to do, and there is no superiority or inferiority involved. Even though Those who are 'listening right on the spot where They are' are Buddhas most worthy of respect, what They must be listening to right on the spot is the Dharma, because 'Those who listen right on the spot to the Dharma' are what Buddhas of the three temporal

worlds are. All Buddhas have already reached spiritual fruition, so we do not speak of Their listening to the Dharma whilst in some developing stage, because They are already Buddhas in the three temporal worlds. Keep in mind that the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds, as They stand right on the spot listening to the Blazing Fire give expression to the Dharma, are Buddhas. It does not mean that They need to follow the teaching methods of our monastic tradition in exactly the same way as we do. And, in attempting to keep to our traditional methods, there have been those whose arrows have met in mid-air.[13] The Blazing Fire is certainly expressing the Dharma for the sake of the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds. And on those occasions when heart and mind are stripped bare, blossoms burst forth on the iron tree and the world is redolent with their perfume. In other words, when it comes down to Their listening to the voicing of the Dharma by the Blazing Fire right where They are, what is it that ultimately manifests before Their very eyes? In everyday terms, it will be Wisdom surpassing the Master or it will be Wisdom equal to the Master. In thoroughly exploring that which is beyond the threshold of Master and disciple, it will be the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds.

Engo said that when the ones we rightly call Monkey White and Monkey Black both throw themselves into the moment at hand, gods appear and demons vanish.[14] As to this statement, even though Seppō is manifesting the Blazing Fire from the same situation that Shibi is in, there could be some way in which Seppō does not enter into the situation in the same way that Shibi does. Be that as it may, is Shibi's Blazing Fire the Buddhas or is he taking all the Buddhas to be the Blazing Fire? In the situations where black and white both act together, Shibi arises and disappears along with the gods and demons, but what Seppō has manifested through sound and form does not distinguish between black and white times. Even though this is so, you need to recognize that Shibi has ways of putting It that are quite right and ways of putting It that are not quite right, whereas Seppō has ways of putting It that take up the Matter and ways of putting It that let the Matter go.

Now, Engo also has a way of putting the Matter that is not the same as either Shibi's or Seppō's. It is his saying, "The Raging Fire spreading across the heavens

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13. An image referring to a disciple's response to a Master's being 'right on', like two arrows shot from opposite directions hitting each other head on.

14. Originally, Monkey White and Monkey Black were nicknames for two Chinese robbers who were famed for their great skill and daring. Seppō is associated with Monkey White through his name, which means White Peak, whereas Shibi is linked to Monkey Black by his name, which means Dark Sands. There is also the implication that even though the two expressed spiritual matters in superficially different manners, what they taught was of one and the same species.

is Buddha giving voice to the Truth," and "The Raging Fire that spreads across the heavens is Truth giving voice to Buddha." This way of putting the Matter serves as a brilliant light for us present-day trainees. Even if we are in the dark about the Raging Fire, Its spreading across the heavens covers us, so that we have our share of It and others have their share too. Whatever is covered by the revolving heavens will completely be the Raging Fire. Why reject 'this' merely to adopt 'that'?

We should be glad that these bags of skin of ours have been able to hear His transforming Truth which has spread across the heavens, even though we've been born in a country far from the land of our saintly Shakyamuni and live at a time distant from His. Even though you are in a place where you may hear what Engo called 'Buddha giving voice to the Truth', still, how deeply entangled are you in your failure to recognize 'the Truth giving voice to Buddha'?

Thus, all the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds are expressed within these worlds by the Dharma, and all the various forms of the Dharma in the three temporal worlds have been expressed within these worlds by the Buddha. Only the heavens cover us, and their winds cut low the tangled nests of kudzu and wisteria vines. A single remark has clearly tested and bested Vimalakīrti and others as well. Thus, Dharma gives voice to Buddha, Dharma practices Buddha, Dharma awakens to Buddha, Buddha gives voice to Dharma, Buddha practices Buddha, and Buddha becomes Buddha. All of these, all together, comprise the everyday behavior of a Buddha doing His practice. Over the heavens and over the earth, over the past and over the present, those who have realized It do not trivialize It, and those who have clarified what It is do not debase It.

Written during the second third of the tenth lunar month in the second year of the Ninji era (late November, 1241) at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple.

Dōgen

23

On What the Buddha Taught

(Bukkyō)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse there are allusions to a poem attributed to Bodhidharma, which may be rendered as follows:

> *The separate Transmission that is outside the Teachings*
> *Does not depend on the written word;*
> *It directly points us to our human heart,*
> *So that we may see our True Nature and thereby become Buddha.*

Versions of this poem have often been used to support the view that the direct one-to-one Transmission, which is characteristic of the Zen Buddhist tradition, was apart from the Buddha's Teachings that had been passed on in the form of the Scriptures. Further, since the Transmission was viewed as outside the Scriptures, the Scriptures were considered unnecessary for realizing Buddhahood and could, therefore, be ignored. Dōgen considered this view as fallacious, since Transmission is not something outside—that is, apart from—what the Buddha taught, and the Scriptural Teachings, which are also part of what the Buddha taught, are not worthless or irrelevant to training. Further, Dōgen understood the opening line of Bodhidharma's poem as saying that Transmission is 'on the outside of the Teachings'. That is, Transmission is not something divorced from what the Buddha taught, but something that exists on the outside of what He taught (Transmission as an outer, concrete event) in contrast with what exists on the inside of what He taught (Scripture as an inner, expedient explanation). Hence, the Transmission and the Scriptural Teachings do not stand against each other, but together comprise 'what the Buddha taught'.

Practicing what the Buddha taught means making the words and ways of all the Buddhas manifest. Because this is what Buddhas and Ancestors have done for the sake of Buddhas and Ancestors, the Teachings have been accurately passed on for the sake of the Teachings. This is what the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma is. From within the Eye of this Wheel, these Teachings have caused all the Buddhas and Ancestors to manifest and to be carried into nirvana. For all the Buddhas and Ancestors, without fail, there is the emergence of each mote of dust and the passing away of each mote of dust, there is the emergence of whole universes and the passing away of whole universes, and there is their emergence

for a single instant and for oceans of kalpas.* Be that as it may, the emergence of a single mote of dust for a single instant has no function that is incomplete, and the emergence of a whole universe for oceans of kalpas is beyond any effort to supply something that is otherwise lacking. This is why it has never been said that any of the Buddhas who realized the Way in the morning and then passed away in the evening ever had any shortcomings in Their meritorious behavior. If it were said that one day is insufficient for Their meritorious behavior, then eighty years of a human life would not be long enough either. When we compare the human span of eighty years with ten or twenty kalpas, it is like one day is to eighty years. The meritorious behavior of this Buddha of eighty years and that Buddha of one day may be difficult to discern clearly. Were you to compare the merit accrued over life spans of long kalpas with the merit accrued over eighty years, you would not even approach having a doubt about the matter. For this reason, what the Buddha taught is, namely, His Teaching for Buddhas, and It is the completely meritorious spiritual behavior of Buddhas and Ancestors. It is not the case that Buddhas are lofty and far-reaching, whereas Their teaching of the Dharma is narrow and petty. You need to realize that when a Buddha is large, His Teaching is large, and when a Buddha is small, His Teaching is small. You need to realize that the Buddhas and Their Teachings are beyond such measurements as 'large or small', and beyond such attributes as 'good, bad, or indifferent', and that these Teachings are not undertaken for the sake of self-instruction or for the instruction of others.

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A certain monk of our tradition once said:

> Our Venerable Shakyamuni, in addition to expounding the Scriptural Teachings during His lifetime, directly Transmitted to Makakashō the Dharma that the Supreme Vehicle is the One Whole Mind. This Dharma has come to be passed on from Successor to Successor.[1] Accordingly, His Teachings are judicious discussions adapted to the capacity of the listener, whereas the Mind is immutable Reality. This One Whole Mind which has been authentically Transmitted has been described as 'the separate Transmission that is outside the Teachings'. It is beyond comparison with anything that is discussed in the Three Vehicles* and the twelve divisions of the

* See *Glossary.*

1. 'The One Whole Mind' *(isshin)* is an alternate term for Buddha Mind and Buddha Nature.

> Scriptural Teachings.[2] Because the One Whole Mind is the Supreme Vehicle, it has been said that "It directly points us to our human heart, so that we may see our True Nature and thereby become Buddha."

As far as it goes, this statement is not about the everyday functioning of Buddha Dharma, for it offers no vital path that takes us beyond self, and it is not descriptive of the everyday behavior of one's whole being. Hundreds, even thousands, of years ago, monks like this one were proclaiming themselves to be spiritual authorities, but if any of them had such a tale to tell as this, you should know that they had neither clarified nor understood what Buddha Dharma and the Buddha's Way are. And why so? Because they do not know Buddha or His Teachings, or what Mind is, or what is inside, or what is outside.[3] The underlying cause of their not knowing is simply that they have never really heard the Buddha Dharma. Now, they do not know what the root and branchings are of that which they call 'the Buddhas'. Never having learned what the bounds of the comings and goings of Buddhas are, they in no way resemble disciples of the Buddha.[4] Their saying that one only Transmits the One Whole Mind and does not Transmit what the Buddha taught is due to their not knowing the Buddha Dharma. They do not know the One Whole Mind of which the Buddha taught, nor have they heeded what the Buddha taught concerning the One Whole Mind. They say that the Teachings of the Buddha are apart from the One Whole Mind, but their 'One Whole Mind' is not the One Whole Mind. They say that the One Whole Mind is outside the Buddha's Teachings, but their 'Buddha's Teachings' are not what the Buddha taught. Even though they have passed on the fallacious remark that the Transmission is outside the Teachings, they have not yet comprehended what is inside and what is outside.

How could the Buddhas and Ancestors who have directly Transmitted one-to-one the Buddha's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching have failed to directly Transmit one-to-one what the Buddha taught? And what is more, why would our venerable monk Shakyamuni have set up Teaching that has no place in

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2. The 'twelve divisions' refers to the twelve categories by which Scriptural writings are classified in the Mahayana tradition. A description of these categories appears later in this discourse.

3. Dōgen's allusion here to 'inside' and 'outside' is ambiguous. In the present context, it most likely refers to what is or is not contained within what the Buddha taught. Later, when Dōgen reinterprets the opening line of Bodhidharma's poem, the meaning of these two terms shifts.

4. That is to say, because they have rejected Scriptural Teachings, they have not learned about the Precepts, which supply the bounds within which Buddhas function, and therefore they do not behave as a true disciple of the Buddha does.

the everyday functioning of those in our Buddhist family? Our Venerable Shakyamuni has already endowed us with the Teachings that are directly Transmitted, so why would any Ancestor of the Buddha do away with Them? This is why what is called 'the One Whole Mind that is the Supreme Vehicle' is synonymous with the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings, which comprise the Smaller Treasure House and the Larger Treasure House.[5]

You need to recognize that what is called Buddha Mind is synonymous with the Buddha's Eye, as well as with a broken wooden ladle,* all thoughts and things, and the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form. As a consequence, It is also synonymous with the mountains, seas, and nations of the earth, as well as with the sun, moon, and stars. 'What the Buddha taught' is another name for everything that arises in nature. What is called 'being outside' is being right here in this situation. It is what is happening, right here in this situation. The term 'the genuine Transmission' means that there is a self within the genuine Transmission because it involves a direct Transmission from a self to a self. It directly Transmits from One Whole Mind to One Whole Mind, for there must be the One Whole Mind in a genuine Transmission. The One Whole Mind that is the Supreme Vehicle is synonymous with soil, stones, sand, and pebbles, and soil, stones, sand, and pebbles are synonymous with the One Whole Mind. Consequently, soil, stones, sand, and pebbles are synonymous with soil, stones, sand, and pebbles. If we speak of the direct Transmission of the One Whole Mind that is the Supreme Vehicle, it needs to be done in this manner.

Be that as it may, the monk who asserted that there is a separate Transmission outside the Teachings has not yet grasped the intent behind this phrase. So, do not believe his erroneous explanation of a separate Transmission outside the Teachings and thereby misunderstand what the Buddha taught. If the matter were as such folks put it, are we to describe the Teaching as 'a separate Transmission outside the Mind'? If we say that it is a separate Transmission outside the Mind, not even a phrase or half a line of verse could have been passed on. And if we do not speak of a separate Transmission outside the Mind, we cannot speak of a separate Transmission outside—that is, apart from—the Teaching.

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5. 'The Larger Treasure House' refers to the Mahayana Canon, whereas 'the Smaller Treasure House' refers to the Pali Canon, which is included within the Mahayana Canon through translations into Chinese or Tibetan.

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Makakashō, who was already the World-honored One's successor, was in possession of the Treasure House of the Dharma and, having directly received the Transmission of the Treasure House of the True Dharma, was responsible for preserving the Buddha's Way. To assert that the Buddha's Teachings may not have been directly Transmitted to him would make the training and practice of the Way a one-sided affair. You need to realize that when one line of Scripture has been genuinely Transmitted, the whole Dharma has been genuinely Transmitted, and that when one line of Scripture has been genuinely Transmitted, the Transmission of the Mountain and the Transmission of the Water has taken place. In sum, this is synonymous with our utter incapacity to separate ourselves from the here and now.

The world-honored Shakyamuni's unsurpassed Enlightened Mind, which is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, was directly Transmitted to Makakashō. It was not directly Transmitted to any of His other disciples. Beyond question, the Direct Transmission is Makakashō. This is why all persons—every single one of them, past or present—who have explored the Truth of the Buddha Dharma have all decided to explore the Scriptural Teachings, and in doing so they have, without fail, explored the Matter* by training under some Ancestor of the Buddha, and without seeking to train under anyone else. If they did not commit themselves to train with an Ancestor of the Buddha, theirs would not have been the right commitment. If you wish to consider whether your commitment is in accord with the Teachings, you need to determine that with an Ancestor of the Buddha. The reason for this is that the Ancestors of the Buddha possess the whole Wheel of the Dharma. To put it simply, only the Ancestors of the Buddha have clarified and have continued to correctly Transmit what the terms 'It exists' or 'It does not exist' means, and what the terms 'being empty' or 'having form' means.

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> Haryō Kōkan was once asked by one of his monks, "Are the intent of our Ancestor Bodhidharma and the intent of the Teachings the same or are they different?"
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> The Master replied, "When a hen is cold, it perches in a tree; when a duck is cold, it enters the water."

When we explore this saying of Kōkan's through our training, we will certainly come face-to-face with Bodhidharma, our founding Ancestor within the Buddha's Way, and we will certainly come to know the Teachings within the Buddha's Way. Now, the monk's asking about the intent of the Ancestor and the intent of the Teachings is equivalent to his asking whether the Ancestor's intent was within the

Way or was separate from It. The Master's saying at this time, "When a hen is cold, it perches in a tree; when a duck is cold, it enters the water" expresses a sameness and a difference. Even so, this goes beyond the sameness versus difference that people are usually concerned with. As a consequence, because his remark goes beyond a discussion of sameness and difference, he may well be saying that it is 'the same difference'. So it is as if he were saying, "Do not ask about sameness and difference."

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> Gensha Shibi was once asked by a monk, "Granting that the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings are not essential, just what was the intent behind our Ancestral Master Bodhidharma's coming from the West?"
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> Master Shibi replied, "The Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings not being absolutely essential."

The monk's asking, "Granting that the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural teachings are not essential, just what was the intent behind the Ancestral Master's coming from the West?" is conventionally thought of as his saying, "Since each of the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings constitutes one of the branches of a forked road, the intent behind the Ancestral Master's coming from the West must lie elsewhere." Those with this conventional view do not recognize that the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings constitute the very intent behind the Ancestral Master's coming from the West. So how much less could they possibly comprehend that the sum total of the eighty-four thousand gates to the Dharma is nothing other than the intent behind the Ancestral Master's coming from the West?

Now let us explore why the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings are not absolutely essential.[6] If there were a time when they were essential, what criteria would we use to determine this? In a situation where the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings are not essential, does our exploration of 'the intent behind the Ancestral Master's coming from the West' manifest itself in our training? It may not be in vain that this question has come forth.

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6. The term 'not absolutely essential' refers to the middle way between asserting, on the one hand, that it is absolutely impossible for someone to realize the Truth without formally studying the Scriptures, and, on the other hand, asserting that because someone can realize the Truth independent of Scriptural study, the Scriptures are totally worthless and can be safely ignored by trainees.

Shibi said, "The Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings are not absolutely essential." This statement is the Wheel of the Dharma. We need to explore through our training that wherever this Wheel of the Dharma turns, what the Buddha taught exists as the Buddha's Teachings. The import of this is that the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings are the Wheel of the Dharma of the Buddha's Ancestors. It turns at times and in places where there are Ancestors of the Buddha, and It turns at times and in places where there are no Ancestors of the Buddha, and It likewise turned before there was an Ancestor and will turn after there is an Ancestor. Moreover, It has the meritorious function of setting the Buddhas and Ancestors a-turning. At the very moment when our Ancestral Master intended to come from the West, the Wheel of the Dharma became not absolutely essential. Saying that It is not absolutely essential does not mean that we do not use It or that It is broken down. It is simply that this Wheel of the Dharma is, at this time, turning the wheel of 'not being absolutely essential'. Without denying the existence of the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings, we should watch for the occasions when they are not absolutely essential. Because they are not absolutely essential, they are the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings, and because they are the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings, they are beyond being the 'Three Vehicles and twelve divisions of Scriptural Teachings'. This is why the Master said that the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings were not absolutely essential.

The following offers but one example of those Three Vehicles and twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings from among the number of examples that exist.

The Three Vehicles

First, there is the vehicle of the shravakas,* who realize the Truth by way of the Four Noble Truths. The Four Noble Truths are the Truth of the existence of suffering, the Truth that suffering has a cause, the Truth that suffering can cease, and the Truth of the Noble Eightfold Path which brings suffering to an end. Hearing of these and then making them their practice, shravakas free themselves from birth, aging, sickness, and death, and ultimately realize the perfection of nirvana. To make these Truths the basis of one's training and practice, and then to assert that suffering and its cause are mundane, whereas its cessation and the path to cessation are what is paramount is an opinion that arises from the perspective of narrow-minded scholars. When the Four Noble Truths are practiced in accord with the Buddha Dharma, They are all realized by each Buddha on His own, just as all the Buddhas have done. The Four Noble Truths are all a matter of 'the Dharma

abiding in the place of the Dharma'. The Four Noble Truths are all manifestations of Truth. The Four Noble Truths are all Buddha Nature. As a consequence, They go beyond intellectual discussions of such matters as 'non-arising' and 'non-activity', and this is tied to the Four Noble Truths not being 'absolutely essential'.

Second, there is the vehicle of the pratyekabuddhas,* who realize the perfection of nirvana by way of the Twelve Links in the Chain of Dependent Origination. The Twelve Links in the Chain of Dependent Origination are first, the darkness of spiritual ignorance; second, the deliberate actions that derive from that ignorance; third, becoming aware of things; fourth, giving name and form to things; fifth, activating the six senses; sixth, making contact through the senses with what arises; seventh, being stimulated through one's senses; eighth, craving; ninth, grasping after; tenth, causing to come into existence; eleventh, giving birth to; and twelfth, aging unto death.

In making the Twelve Links in the Chain of Dependent Origination the basis of their practice, pratyekabuddhas explore causality in the past, present, and future, and talk in terms of a subject that sees and an object that is seen. Even so, they take up causal relationships one by one and explore them thoroughly through their training, but their doing so is not something that is absolutely essential to the turning of the Dharma Wheel, for it is not absolutely essential to see every link in the causal chain. Keep in mind that, since the darkness of spiritual ignorance is inseparable from the One Whole Mind, deliberate acts, becoming aware of things, and so forth, are also inseparable from the One Whole Mind. Since the darkness of ignorance is inseparable from cessation, then deliberate acts, becoming aware of things, and so forth, are also inseparable from cessation. Since the darkness of ignorance is inseparable from nirvana, deliberate acts, becoming aware of things, and so forth, are also inseparable from nirvana. We can speak in this way because what arises is also what ceases. 'The darkness of ignorance' is a phrase we use in talking. 'Becoming aware of things', 'giving them name and form', and so forth, are no different. Keep in mind that the darkness of ignorance, deliberate actions, and so forth, are not different from Seigen Gyōshi's saying to his disciple Sekitō Kisen, "I have a certain Hatchet and would give It to you, should you choose to reside on this mountain with me." The darkness of ignorance, deliberate actions, becoming aware of things, and so forth, are not different from Sekitō's responding, "At the time when I was sent to you, I received your promise of being allowed to have your Hatchet, Reverend Monk, and so I would like to receive It."[7]

7. Originally, Sekitō, still in his teens, had gone to train at Sōkei Monastery under the aged Daikan Enō. Just before Enō's passing away, he advised Sekitō to "go train under Gyōshi" (C. *Hsing-ssu ch'ü*), but Sekitō misunderstood what Enō had told him and thought he had

Third, there is the vehicle of the bodhisattvas,* those who realize fully perfected supreme enlightenment by putting into practice the Teachings concerning the Six Paramitas. This 'realizing' of which they speak is beyond anything they do deliberately, beyond their doing nothing, beyond their initiating something, beyond their newly accomplishing something, beyond their having realized It in some remote past life, beyond what they originally intended to do, beyond anything they are attached to: it is simply their full realization of fully perfected supreme enlightenment.

What we call the Six Paramitas—that is, the six practices that ferry all sentient beings to the Other Shore—are the practice of freely giving wealth and Dharma, the practice of observing the Precepts, the practice of patience, the practice of zealous devotion, the practice of meditation, and the practice of wise discernment. These, all together, constitute supreme enlightenment. They are beyond any discussion of 'nothing arising' or of 'not deliberately doing anything'. They do not always treat the giving of wealth and Dharma as the first thing or enlightenment as the ultimate thing. It says in the Scriptures, "A keen-witted bodhisattva makes enlightenment the first thing and makes giving the ultimate thing. A slow-witted bodhisattva makes giving the first thing and enlightenment the ultimate thing."

Even so, patience can also be first, as can meditation. And there will be their manifesting the Thirty-six Paramitas, which is their getting snares from snares.[8]

The word 'paramita' means reaching the Other Shore. Even though 'the Other Shore' is beyond any semblance or trace of coming or going, one's arrival fully manifests, for arrival refers to one's spiritual question. Do not think that training and practice merely lead you to the Other Shore, for there is training and practice on that Other Shore. When we do our training and practice, it <u>is</u> our arrival at the Other Shore, because this training and practice is invariably supplied with the capacity to make the whole universe manifest completely.

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been instructed to "go ponder the Matter" (C. *Hsin-ssu ch'ü*). However, Nangaku Ejō, one of Enō's two successors, understood what Enō had said and had Sekitō go train under Seigen Gyōshi, Enō's other successor. Gyōshi's Hatchet characterizes the Dharma that is passed on at Transmission as That which cuts through all delusions and severs all karmic roots. Sekitō's remark expresses his commitment to Gyōshi as his Transmission Master.

8. The Thirty-six Paramitas derive from the manifesting of each of the Six Paramitas within the practice of each one of the Six Paramitas. The Six Paramitas are like six traps for snaring the Truth, each of which produces another six traps, that is, the Thirty-six Paramitas.

The Twelve Divisions of the Scriptural Teachings

First, the *Sūtras*: the Scriptures that are in accord with what the Buddha is reported to have said.

Second, the *Geyas*: the reiterations in verse that extol the Dharma.

Third, the *Vyākaraṇas*: the predictions of Buddhahood for all.

Fourth, the *Gāthās*: verses that are chanted.

Fifth, the *Udānas*: the Buddha's spontaneous voicings of the Dharma without His having been asked.

Sixth, the *Nidānas*: the accounts of causes and coexisting conditions.

Seventh, the *Avadānas*: the parables.

Eighth, the *Itivṛittakas*: the past lives of the Bodhisattvas.

Ninth, the *Jātakas*: the past lives of the Buddha.

Tenth, the *Vaipulyas*: writings that extensively expound the Dharma.

Eleventh, the *Adbhutadharmas*: stories of miraculous events.

Twelfth, the *Upadeshas*: the commentaries.

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For the sake of others, the Tathagata gave voice directly to both the provisional Teachings and the True Dharma[9] on such matters as our entry into the world of the five skandhas* with its eighteen realms connected with our six senses: we call this body of Teaching the *Sūtras*. Sometimes, by appending verses comprised of lines of four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine words, He extolled the Teaching on such matters as one's entry into the world of the mundane skandhas: we call these verse passages the *Geyas*. Sometimes, He gave a direct account of the future of sentient beings, even to the point of predicting such things as the realization of Buddhahood by pigeons and sparrows: we call these predictions of Buddhahood the *Vyākaraṇas*. Sometimes, by means of individual poems, He gave an account of such things as entry into the fleshly skandhas: we call these poems the *Gāthās*. Sometimes, He spontaneously talked about human concerns without anyone having asked Him a question: we call these talks the *Udānas*. Sometimes,

9. An example of this occurs in the Burning House parable in the *Lotus Scripture*, where there is the provisional Teaching that there are three vehicles, whereas with the True Dharma there is, in fact, but One Vehicle.

He summarized matters that were not spiritually good in worldly societies and tied them to the Precepts: we call these summaries the *Nidānas*. Sometimes, He talked about the ways of the world by means of parables: we call these talks the *Avadānas*. Sometimes, He talked about events in worldly realms of the past: we call these talks the *Itivṛittakas*. Sometimes, He talked about events in His own past lives: we call these talks the *Jātakas*. Sometimes, He talked about far-reaching, world-wide issues: we call these talks the *Vaipulyas*. Sometimes, He talked about wondrous, unprecedented events in the world: we call these talks the *Adbhutadharmas*. Sometimes, He asked hard questions concerning the ways of the world: we call these queries the *Upadeshas*. These divisions constitute His ways of teaching by ordinary modes of expression. He established these twelve divisions of His Teachings so that sentient beings might rejoice and take delight in them.

It is rare to hear the names of the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings. When the Buddha Dharma has spread throughout a society, one hears of them. When the Buddha Dharma has disappeared, they are not heard of, nor are they heard of when the Buddha Dharma has not yet spread abroad. Those who have put down good spiritual roots over a long time are able to meet the Buddha and hear them. Those who have already heard them will surely realize fully perfected supreme enlightenment in a short while.

Each of these twelve divisions is called a Scripture. They are also called the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings as well as the twelve parts of the Scriptures. Because each of the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings is equipped with the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings, there are one hundred forty-four divisions of the Scriptural Teachings. Because all the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings are included within each of the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings, they simply comprise the whole of the divisions of the Scriptural Teachings. And at the same time, They go beyond calculation in numbers, regardless of whether those numbers are above or below a hundred million. They are all the Eye of the Buddhas and Ancestors, the Bones and Marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors, the daily activities of the Buddhas and Ancestors, the radiance of the Buddhas and Ancestors, the splendor of the Buddhas and Ancestors, and the meritorious behavior of the Buddhas and Ancestors. The one who encounters the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings encounters the Buddhas and Ancestors, and the one who speaks of the Buddhas and Ancestors speaks of the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings.

Thus, Seigen's letting his foot dangle is nothing other than the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings.[10] And Nangaku's expressing his understanding of his kōan* by saying, "To describe It in words does not hit the bull's-eye" is nothing other than the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings. Now, the meaning of Shibi's expression, 'not being absolutely essential', is in no way different from this. When we understand the import of this, it simply refers to Ancestors of the Buddha, and to Them alone. Further, there is no being 'half a person' and there is no 'one absolute thing': it is 'nothing ever having arisen'. At this very moment, how is It? You should respond, "It is No-thing That Is Absolutely Essential."

Sometimes, there have been those who have spoken of nine parts, which could be called the nine divisions of the Scriptural Teachings.

The Nine Parts

First, the *Sūtras*
Second, the Independent Poems *(Gāthās)*
Third, the Past Lives of the Bodhisattvas *(Itivṛittakas)*
Fourth, the *Jātakas*
Fifth, the Wondrous Events (*Adbhutadharmas)*
Sixth, the Accounts of Causes and Coexisting Conditions *(Nidānas)*
Seventh, the Parables *(Avadānas)*
Eighth, the Appended Passages in Verse *(Geyas)*
Ninth, the Commentaries *(Upadeshas)*

Because the nine parts are each equipped with nine parts, there are eighty-one parts. Because the nine parts are each equipped with the whole of the parts, they are the nine parts. Without the merit of each part's belonging to the whole, they could not be the nine parts. Because there is the merit of their belonging to the whole of the parts, the whole of the parts belongs to each part. This is why they are in eighty-one parts, why they are a part of This, why they are a part of me, why they are a part of the hossu,* why they are a part of the traveling staff,* and why they are a part of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching.

10. When Sekitō Kisen requested the Hatchet that Seigen Gyōshi had promised him, Seigen is said to have dangled his foot. Dōgen states that this was Seigen's way of passing on to Sekitō the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings, which form the Hatchet of the Dharma.

Shakyamuni Buddha once said in verse:

> *This Dharma, which is in nine parts,*
> *I have humbly offered, as It suits each sentient being.*
> *For entering the Great Vehicle, It is the very source,*
> *Which is why I have voiced these Teachings.*

You need to realize that the words 'I' and 'this' both refer to the Tathagata.[11] His Face and Eye, Body and Mind customarily come into view through this Dharma. This 'I' and 'this' are already the nine-part Dharma, so the nine-part Dharma must therefore be both 'I' and 'this'. One phrase or one verse in the present will be the nine-part Dharma, and because this 'I' is synonymous with 'this', He has humbly given voice to It, in conformity with the needs of sentient beings. Thus, since all sentient beings live their lives from within the here and now, He has, accordingly, given voice to these Teachings, and since they die their deaths from within the here and now, He has, accordingly, given voice to these Teachings. Even for the sake of their momentary behavior and the fleeting expressions on their faces, He has, accordingly, given voice to these Teachings. And since, in His transforming each and every sentient being, He would help them all to enter the Buddha's Way, He has, accordingly, given voice to these Teachings. These sentient beings are followers of the 'I' that is this nine-part Dharma. These followers follow where He goes, follow where they themselves go, follow where their life goes, follow where the 'I' goes, and follow where the 'this' goes. Because these sentient beings are, unquestionably, the 'this' of His 'I', they are every part of the nine-part Dharma.

What He called 'the very source for entering the Great Vehicle' is also called 'awakening to the Great Vehicle', 'practicing the Great Vehicle', 'heeding the Great Vehicle', and 'giving expression to the Great Vehicle'. Thus, it goes beyond saying that a sentient being has spontaneously realized the Way, for they are a part of It. Accordingly, sentient beings have realized the Way. Entering is the source, and the source means from beginning to end. The Buddha expresses the Dharma, and the Dharma expresses the Buddha. The Dharma is expressed by the Buddha, and the Buddha is expressed by the Dharma. The Blazing Fire expresses both the Buddha and the Dharma. The Buddha and the Dharma both express the Blazing Fire.

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11. That is, what the 'I' refers to is inseparable from the Dharma that this 'I' has voiced, since the epithet 'Tathagata' applies to one who has gone beyond any sense of a personal self.

In these Teachings, there is good reason for giving voice to the whys and wherefores. Even if the Buddha had intended not to expound these Scriptures, it would have been impossible. This is why He said that the Why expounded this Scripture.[12] What the Why expounds fills the heavens, and what fills the heavens is what the Why expounds. Both this Buddha and that Buddha, with one voice, proclaim 'this Scripture'; both one's own True Self and the True Self of others expound the Why as 'this Scripture'. Thus, He expounded this Scripture, and 'this Scripture' is synonymous with 'what the Buddha taught'. You need to know that the Buddha's Teachings, which are as innumerable as the sands of the Ganges, are the awakening stick and the ceremonial hossu, the traveling staff and the Fist.

In sum, you need to know that such things as the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptural Teachings are the Eye of the Buddhas and Ancestors. How could those who have not opened their Eye to This possibly be descendants of the Buddhas and Ancestors? How could those who have not understood It and come forth with It possibly Transmit one-to-one the True Eye of the Buddhas and Ancestors? Those who have not realized the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching are not Dharma heirs of the Seven Buddhas.*

Given to the assembly on the fourteenth day of the eleventh lunar month of the second year of the Ninji era (December 17, 1241) in the Monks' Hall in Kōshō-ji Temple, Kyōto Prefecture.

Redelivered to the assembly on the seventh day of the eleventh lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (November 30, 1242) in the Monks' Hall in Kōshō-ji Temple, Kyōto Prefecture.

12. Dōgen gives a twist to the meaning of the last line of the Buddha's verse by treating the term for 'why' as a noun, 'the Why'.

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On the Marvelous Spiritual Abilities

(Jinzū)

Translator's Introduction: The term *jinzū* was widely used both within and outside Buddhism to refer to what were considered esoteric, supernatural, or even magical powers, which many persons apparently sought, often with the motive of gaining power and prestige or of having some advantage over others. Traditionally there were six of these abilities which, in Buddhism, functioned as: (1) the ability to freely deal with external situations or circumstances as needed (2) the ability to see what is truly going on, (3) the ability to hear what someone is truly saying, (4) the ability to know what someone's true intentions are, (5) the ability to recognize what someone's karma from a past life is, and (6) the ability to know when someone has cleansed that karma. All but the sixth were presumably attainable by anyone; only Buddhas and arhats could realize the last one.

On the basis of remarks made by various Ancestral Masters, Dōgen explains that there is a greater ability, one that surpasses all other marvelous abilities. This marvelous spiritual ability involves one's natural functioning in everyday life after having dropped off body and mind with its attendant greeds, hatreds, and delusions; that is, it is just the everyday doing of whatever needs to be done. Performing these everyday acts is, in itself, an expression of this greater marvelous spiritual ability. Further, in that such behavior involves the natural functioning of one's six senses, Dōgen identifies them as the six marvelous spiritual abilities.

The marvelous spiritual ability that we are speaking of here is the very food and drink of those who are in the Buddha's family, and the Buddhas have not wearied of it even to the present day. There are the six marvelous abilities, and there is the one whole marvelous spiritual ability, and there is the transcending of marvelous spiritual abilities, and there is the unsurpassed spiritual ability. The last is our three thousand acts of a morning and our eight hundred acts of an evening, which we take as the normal state of things. Though it is said that this spiritual ability arises along with Buddhahood, it goes unrecognized in Buddhas: though it is said that it vanishes along with a Buddha, it does not thereby destroy a Buddha. When a Buddha goes up to the high heavens, it likewise goes along: when a Buddha comes down to earth, it comes along too. It is present both when Buddhas do the practice to realize the Truth and when they have proved the Truth for Themselves. They are as still as the snow-capped peaks and resemble the trees and

rocks.[1] The Buddhas of the past were the disciples of Shakyamuni Buddha. They came to Him out of devotion to the kesa* and invariably held aloft a stupa.* At one such time, Shakyamuni Buddha said, "The marvelous spiritual ability of all Buddhas is a wonder to behold." This is why you need to know that, in the present as well as in the future, things will be no different.

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Meditation Master Isan Reiyū was an Ancestor of the thirty-seventh generation directly from the Tathagata Shakyamuni. He was a Dharma heir of Hyakujō Ekai. Of the present-day Ancestors of the Buddha who have appeared throughout the world, many are not distant descendants of Isan, and they are distant descendants of Isan.

> Once when Isan was lying down asleep, his disciple Kyōzan Ejaku came in to call upon him. Thereupon, Isan rolled over, turning his face to the wall as he lay there.
>
> Kyōzan said, "It is just me, your disciple Ejaku. Pray, venerable monk, stay just as you are."
>
> Isan made an effort to rise just as Kyōzan was leaving, and he called out, "Ejaku, my disciple!"
>
> Kyōzan came back.
>
> Isan said, "This old monk would like to tell you his dream. Please listen to it."
>
> Kyōzan lowered his head, preparing to listen. Isan said, "Try and interpret my dream, and I'll listen."
>
> Kyōzan fetched him a basin of water and a hand towel.
>
> Isan then washed his face. After he had finished washing his face, he sat for a bit, whereupon his disciple Kyōgen Chikan came in. Isan said to him, "Disciple Ejaku and I have just been putting into practice our marvelous spiritual ability, which is on a level above all others, one that is not the same as those found in the Lesser Course."*
>
> Kyōgen said, "Your disciple Chikan was just sitting outside, so I am aware of all that went on."

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1. 'Snow-capped peaks' is often used in Zen Buddhism as a reference to those who have been successfully training for a long time. Similarly, 'trees' are trainees who have not yet cut down the tree of self, and 'stones' are trainees who are now unresponsive to the arising of defiling passions.

* See *Glossary.*

> Isan said, "My disciple, you should endeavor to express it." Thereupon, Kyōgen made a cup of tea and brought it to him.
>
> Isan, praising them, said, "The marvelous spiritual ability and wise discernment of the two of you have far surpassed even that of Shariputra and Moggallana."[2]

If you would know what the marvelous spiritual ability of those in our Buddha family is, you should explore through your training what Isan has asserted. Because it is not the same as the inferior abilities of the Lesser Course, a person who undertakes this exploration is, as a consequence, called a student who is exploring the Matter,* and anyone who does not undertake this exploration is not such a student of Buddhism. It is this marvelous spiritual ability and wise discernment that Successor after Successor has mutually Transmitted. What is more, do not undertake to study the spiritual abilities of non-Buddhists and those of the Lesser Courses in India, and do not take up what is studied by scholastics and their like.

Now, in exploring Isan's marvelous spiritual ability, even though it is spoken of as being unsurpassed, it is beyond that, for it is on a level above and beyond anything else. That is to say, after Isan had lain down, there was his turning of his face towards the wall as he lay there, there was his endeavoring to arise, there was his calling out to his disciple Ejaku, there was his referring to his having had a dream, there was his sitting for a short while after he had washed his face, and there was Kyōzan's lowering his head to hear and his fetching a basin of water and a towel.

Nevertheless, Isan said, "Disciple Ejaku and I have just been putting into practice the marvelous spiritual ability, which is on a level above all others, one that is not the same as those found in the Lesser Course." We need to explore what this marvelous spiritual ability is, for it is what the Ancestral Masters who truly Transmit the Buddha Dharma have spoken of. Do not fail to mention the telling of a dream or the washing of the face, for you must ascertain that such actions are marvelous spiritual abilities that are on a level above all others.

To say that it is 'not the same as those found in the Lesser Course', means that it is not the same as the small ideas and small opinions associated with the Lesser Course, nor will it be anything like those of the 'three times wise and ten times saintly'.* These persons all practice the five lesser spiritual abilities, and they only attain a small idea of their True Self: they do not come near to the greater spiritual ability of the Ancestors of the Buddha. This is an ability of Ancestors of

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2. Shariputra and Moggallana were two of Shakyamuni Buddha's ten chief disciples. The former was known for his wise discernment and the latter for his spiritual abilities.

the Buddha, a marvelous spiritual ability that goes beyond Buddhahood. People who would model themselves on this marvelous spiritual ability must not be impressed by devilish people and others who are outside the Way. Academic students of Scriptures have not yet heard of such an ability or, if they have heard of it, they find it difficult to trust in. Those of the Two Lesser Courses, those who are outside the Way, those who lecture on Scriptures, scholarly commentators, and the like, are taught about the lesser spiritual abilities but do not learn about the greater marvelous spiritual ability. All Buddhas abide in and keep to the greater marvelous spiritual ability, and They Transmit this marvelous spiritual ability of Buddhas. Were it not for this ability, the basin of water and the towel would not have been fetched, nor would Isan have lain there with his face turned towards the wall, nor would he have washed his face and then sat up for a bit.

Such things as the lesser spiritual abilities do also exist, enveloped within the capacity of this greater spiritual ability. The greater marvelous spiritual ability is in contact with the lesser spiritual abilities, but the lesser spiritual abilities are not aware of the greater marvelous spiritual ability. These lesser spiritual abilities have been described as 'a hair swallowing the vast ocean' and 'a poppy seed enclosing Mount Sumeru'. They are also synonymous with 'the upper part of the body emitting water and the lower part of the body emitting fire'.[3] Also, the first five spiritual abilities, and even the sixth spiritual ability, are all lesser spiritual abilities. Those people who devote themselves to these abilities have not yet experienced the marvelous spiritual ability of a Buddha, even in their dreams. The five spiritual abilities, along with the sixth spiritual ability, are called lesser spiritual abilities because they are all tainted by their practice being considered as separate from enlightenment and because they are confined to some time or some place. They reside in life but do not manifest after one's death; they belong to oneself but do not belong to someone else. Though they may manifest in this land of ours, they may not manifest in all other countries; though some may manifest them without trying, others cannot manifest them when they would.

3. This is an allusion to a passage in the *Lotus Scripture*, wherein a mother asks her two sons to display various wondrous abilities for the sake of their father, a Brahman who does not follow the Buddhist Way, so that he will join the three of them in going to visit the Buddha. With their father in mind, the two sons perform various wondrous transformations, such as "walking, standing, sitting, and reclining within space, the upper part of their bodies emitting water and the lower part of their bodies emitting fire." A similar act, called the 'Twin Wonder', was performed by the Buddha when He went back to visit His family after His enlightenment.

This greater spiritual ability is not like that. The Teachings, practice, and realization of all Buddhas alike are made fully manifest through their marvelous spiritual ability. Not only is it fully manifested within the vicinity of all Buddhas, it is also fully manifested above and beyond Buddhahood. The marvelous spiritual ability, which is the way Buddhas teach, is truly mind-boggling. It manifests even before someone has a body, and its manifestation is not confined to past, present, or future. Were it not for the marvelous spiritual ability of the Buddha, then all the Buddhas' rousing Their mind to realize Buddhahood, Their training and practice, Their enlightenment, and Their realizing nirvana would not yet exist. Right this minute, the inexhaustible Ocean of the Dharma Realm is constantly present and unchanging, all of which is the marvelous spiritual ability of Buddha. Not only does a single hair swallow up this vast Ocean, a single hair sustains and retains this vast Ocean; a single hair manifests this vast Ocean; a single hair disgorges this vast Ocean; a single hair uses this vast Ocean. Do not take as your lesson from this that when a single hair swallows up and disgorges the whole Dharma Realm, then, since there is only one whole Dharma Realm, the Dharma Realm can no longer exist.

A single poppy seed's enclosing all of Mount Sumeru is also like this. And there is a poppy seed that naturally disgorges Mount Sumeru and a poppy seed that naturally manifests the Ocean of the Inexhaustible Treasure House of the Dharma Realm. There is also a single poppy seed that intentionally spits out Mount Sumeru and a single poppy seed that intentionally makes the Ocean of the Inexhaustible Treasure House of the Dharma Realm manifest. When a single hair and a single poppy seed disgorge the vast Ocean, they spew It out in one instant and spew It out for ten thousand kalpas.* Because ten thousand kalpas and one instant, alike, have been spewed out from a hair and a poppy seed, from whence have the hair and the poppy seed been obtained? They have been obtained precisely from the marvelous spiritual ability. Since this 'having been obtained' is synonymous with the marvelous spiritual ability, it means that this ability simply gives birth to itself. Furthermore, you need to explore the fact that it does not appear and disappear within the three times of past, present, and future. All Buddhas joyfully disport within this marvelous spiritual ability.

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Lay Disciple Hō'on was an eminent person who was seated among the Ancestors. He not only trained under Baso Dōitsu and Sekitō Kisen but also had many meetings and encounters with Masters who truly walked the Way in our tradition. He once said in verse:

The marvelous spiritual ability manifests its enlightened functioning
In our carrying water and our hauling firewood.

You need to thoroughly explore this principle through your training. 'Carrying water' refers to the custom of loading up and toting water. Sometimes a disciple loads up and totes this water for his own sake, and sometimes he does it for the sake of others. This is what is meant by being a Buddha of marvelous spiritual abilities. Although knowledge itself is a transient thing, the marvelous spiritual ability is always a marvelous spiritual ability. Even if someone is unacquainted with it, what it teaches is not subject to fading out or to disappearing. Even if people are ignorant of it, what it teaches arises spontaneously. Even if they do not know that carrying water is a marvelous spiritual ability, the spiritual ability of carrying water is not subject to regression.

'Hauling firewood' means carrying wood for fuel. For instance, it is like what the Sixth Ancestor did of old. Even though he may not have recognized his marvelous spiritual abilities in his three thousand acts of a morning or may not have had the marvelous spiritual abilities in mind during his eight hundred acts of an evening, these acts were still a full manifestation of his marvelous spiritual ability.

Truly, those who meet and pay attention to the enlightened functioning of the marvelous spiritual ability of all the Buddhas and Tathagatas will, beyond doubt, realize the Way. This is why the realization of the Way by all the Buddhas—every one of Them—has unquestionably been fully accomplished through the effects of this marvelous spiritual ability. As a consequence, you should explore through your training that even though we were speaking just now of 'the emitting of water' of the Lesser Course as being a lesser spiritual ability, 'carrying water' is a greater spiritual ability. Carrying water and carrying firewood have never been abandoned, for people have not neglected them. Thus, these actions have been passed down from the distant past to the present day without a single person, even for a moment, falling away from them or turning them aside: this is due to the functioning of their marvelous spiritual ability. This is the greater marvelous spiritual ability, which is beyond any similarity with the inferior abilities of the Lesser Course.

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Once when Tōzan Ryōkai was attending on Ungan Donjō, Ungan asked him, "What is the enlightened functioning of my disciple Ryōkai's marvelous spiritual ability?"

With hands folded in shashu,* Tōzan then came and stood right in front of him.

Ungan again asked him, "What is the enlightened functioning of your marvelous spiritual ability?"

Tōzan then, wishing him well, bowed in respect and took his leave.

In this account, the marvelous spiritual ability is present as Tōzan's hearing his Master's words and completely understanding the import behind them and as the particulars of what he did in response fitting together with the Truth, like a box with its lid. By all means, recognize that the enlightened functioning of Ungan's marvelous spiritual ability has certainly produced descendants, persons who did not spiritually regress. Ungan must certainly have been one of the Highest Ancestors, a person spiritually unsurpassed. Do not idly speculate on whether he or his descendants could in any way resemble non-Buddhists or those of the Two Lesser Courses.

In the Buddha's Way, there are spiritual transformations and spiritual abilities associated with the upper part of the body and the lower part of the body. The whole universe in all ten directions, right now, is the one whole True Body of a shramana.[4] Strange as it may seem, the waters from the nine mountains and the eight oceans to the Ocean of Buddha Nature and the Ocean of Buddha Wisdom are the waters emitted from the upper part of his body, the lower part of his body, and the middle part of his body. In addition, they are the waters that are emitted from the upper part of what is not the body, the lower part of what is not the body, and the middle part of what is not the body. This extends to the emitting of fire also. And this is not limited to such things as water, fire and wind, it is also the upper part of his body emitting Buddhas, and the lower part of his body emitting Buddhas, and the upper part of his body emitting Ancestors, and the lower part of his body emitting Ancestors, and the upper part of his body emitting immeasurable kalpas of time, and the lower part of his body emitting immeasurable kalpas of time, and the upper part of his body emitting the Ocean of the Dharma Realm, and the upper part of his body absorbing the Ocean of the Dharma Realm. And what is

4. Although 'shramana' is a term widely used in reference to Buddhist monks in general and novices in particular, more specific definitions describe a shramana as someone who has renounced the world, has let go of the defiling passions of greed, hatred, and delusion, and practices compassion for all beings. Hence, the term could equally well apply to a lay Buddhist who is completely committed to the practice of the Way. Similarly, even though the grammatical gender of the Sanskrit word shramana is masculine, its usage by Dōgen is neutral and would not have excluded women.

more, his spitting out six or seven nations of the world or his swallowing up two or three of them is no different. The four elements, the five elements, the six elements, all elements, or immeasurable elements at this very moment, alike, are his marvelous spiritual ability which gives rise to them and makes them disappear: they are his marvelous spiritual ability to swallow them up and to spit them out.[5] It is his swallowing up and spitting out each and every aspect of the great earth and the vast expanse of space at every moment. Being twirled about by a poppy seed becomes a measure of his spiritual ability: being dangled by a hair becomes a measure of his spiritual ability. They arise along with That which is beyond anything our consciousness can recognize, and they abide in That which is beyond anything our consciousness can recognize, and they take Their true refuge in That which is beyond anything our consciousness can recognize. The ever-changing characteristics of the marvelous spiritual ability of Buddhas have no connection with something short or something long, so, in all seriousness, how can one possibly undertake to evaluate Them simply by making comparisons?

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> Long ago, when a holy man who had attained the first five spiritual abilities was attending on the Buddha,[6] he asked Him, "The Buddha has six spiritual abilities and I have five of them. What, pray, is that sixth one?"
>
> The Buddha then called out to him, saying, "Holy man with the five spiritual abilities!"
>
> The holy man responded with a "Yes?"
>
> The Buddha said, "That is the one spiritual ability which you should have asked me about."

We need to explore this account carefully. How could the holy man possibly have known that the Buddha had six spiritual abilities? The Buddha had immeasurable spiritual abilities and wise discernment, and was not limited to merely six abilities. Even though the holy man said that he saw just six abilities, it was beyond him to attain even six spiritual abilities, so how much less could he allow for other spiritual abilities, even in his dreams? Now, let us ask something. Even though the holy man would have said that he had seen the Venerable

5. The four elements are earth, water, fire, and wind; the five are the four elements plus space; the six are the five elements plus consciousness.

6. A 'holy man' refers to a Hindu ascetic.

Shakyamuni, could he truly say that he had 'seen Buddha'?[7] Even though he might say that he had 'seen Buddha', could he truly say that he had met the Venerable Shakyamuni? Even though one can encounter the Venerable Shakyamuni, even though one may say that he has 'seen Buddha', we need to ask, has such a person encountered 'the Holy One with five spiritual abilities' yet? Through exploring these questions, we can learn the use of the vines that embrace and the vines that are severed.[8] How could saying that the Buddha has six marvelous spiritual abilities possibly reach even the level of counting the riches of one's neighbor?

Now, what is at the heart of the Venerable Shakyamuni's saying, "That is the one spiritual ability which you should have asked me about?" He does not say that the holy man has the one spiritual ability, nor does He say that the holy man lacks it. Even though He gave expression to the natural functioning of that one spiritual ability, how could the holy man have possibly penetrated what that one spiritual ability is? For, even though the holy man had five abilities, they were not five of the abilities encompassed within the six spiritual abilities that the Buddha had. Even though the abilities of the holy man were seen through by the Buddha's use of His spiritual abilities, how could the holy man's abilities possibly see through to the spiritual abilities of a Buddha? If the holy man had seen through to even one spiritual ability of the Buddha, he could have seen right through to Buddha from this spiritual ability. When we look at a holy man, there is that which resembles a Buddha's spiritual abilities, and when we look at the behavior of a Buddha, there is that which resembles the abilities of a holy man, but you should realize that the latter's abilities are not what the marvelous spiritual abilities of a Buddha are. When there is no penetration to the Truth, the five spiritual abilities are in no way akin to Buddha.

At the heart of what the Venerable Shakyamuni was saying is, "Of what use is your asking about the sixth spiritual ability? You could have asked about any of the abilities," and "You should have asked about the unsurpassed spiritual ability and about the one marvelous spiritual ability, for in no way is a holy man a match for the one spiritual ability." Thus, the marvelous spiritual abilities of a Buddha and the abilities of others bear the same name of 'spiritual abilities', yet the spiritual abilities of the two are different by far.

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7. To 'see Buddha' is a Zen term for seeing Buddha Nature either in oneself or in another.

8. 'The vines that embrace' refers to the Master-disciple relationship in which both supply support for each other. 'The vines that are severed' refers to entangling relationships that need to be severed. Dōgen will explore these two references in Discourse 47: On 'The Vines That Entangle: The Vines That Embrace' (*Kattō*).

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Thus it was that Rinzai Gigen once quoted the following poem by a man of old:

The ways in which the Tathagata displayed His whole being
Were for the purpose of responding to how people felt.
Fearing lest people give rise to nihilistic views,
He provisionally put forth hollow terms.

His speaking expediently of His 'thirty-two bodily marks'
And of His 'eighty physical characteristics' was but an empty sound,[9]
For His physical body is not His True Body,
And That which is beyond characteristics is His True Form.

Great Master Rinzai then commented on this poem:

> A Buddha has six spiritual abilities that boggle the mind. But all heavenly beings, holy men, asuras,* and mighty demons also have spiritual abilities, so surely they must be Buddhas as well. Right?
>
> O my fellow Buddhist trainees, make no mistake! When the asuras were defeated in battle against Indra, Lord of the Trayastrimsha Heavens, they took eighty-four thousand of their kith and kin under their governance, and concealed themselves within the hollows of lotus roots. Surely this was not being saintly, was it?
>
> In what I, a mountain monk, have just imparted to you concerning these lesser spiritual abilities, all refer to karmically* inherited powers or powers induced by drugs or sorcery. Well, the six marvelous spiritual abilities of a Buddha are not like those powers. When Buddhas enter the realm of forms and colors, They are not captivated by forms or colors; when They enter the realm of sounds, They are not captivated by sounds; when They enter the realm of odors, They are not captivated by smells; when They enter the realm of tastes, They are not captivated by tastes; when They enter the realm of tactile sensations, They are not captivated by what They physically

9. The thirty-two marks were considered to be the signs of a true world ruler, whereas having the eighty characteristics in addition to these thirty-two marks was viewed to be the signs of a genuine Buddha.

feel; when They enter the realms of thoughts and things, They are not captivated by whatever arises there. Thus, when someone arrives at the point where form and color, sound, smell, taste, touch, and thoughts and things are all characteristics that are empty of any substance, there can be nothing that binds this follower of the Way, who has gone beyond karmic conditionings. Even though these characteristics are what the five skandhas* spew forth, they are simply the bases for this follower's marvelous spiritual abilities as he treads the earth.

O my fellow Buddhist trainees, the True Buddha has no set shape and the True Dharma has no fixed form. You are simply fashioning imitations and creating forms built upon what is ephemeral. Though you may even attain those things you seek, they will all be ghosts of wild foxes and will not be the true Buddha, for these ghosts are nothing but the views and opinions of non-Buddhists.

Accordingly, the six marvelous spiritual abilities of all Buddhas are not something that can be matched by any of the various lofty beings and devilish people or by those of the Two Lesser Courses, nor are they something such persons can fathom. The six marvelous spiritual abilities of the Buddha's Way are what have been directly Transmitted only to the disciples of the Buddha within the Buddha's Way, one-to-one, and They have not been passed on to other persons. The six marvelous spiritual abilities of a Buddha are directly Transmitted within the Buddha's Way. Those to whom they have not been directly Transmitted, one-to-one, cannot comprehend the six marvelous spiritual abilities of a Buddha. You should explore through your training with your Master that those to whom the six marvelous spiritual abilities of Buddhas have not been directly Transmitted, one-to-one, will not be persons within the Way of the Buddhas.

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Hyakujō Ekai once said:

When our eyes, ears, nose, and tongue are undefiled by the various material and immaterial things that arise, we call this 'receiving and keeping to a four-line Dharma poem' and also 'the four stages* of arhathood'. And when the six sense gates leave no trace, we call this 'the six marvelous spiritual abilities'. Simply, at this very moment when we are smoothly going on, unhindered by all the various material and immaterial things that arise, and having brought to an end our dependency on our discriminatory thinking, then this too

> is called the 'the six marvelous spiritual abilities'. Not claiming these marvelous spiritual abilities as one's own is what we call not 'possessing' spiritual abilities. The tracks of Bodhisattvas* who do not 'possess' spiritual abilities, as spoken of here, cannot be traced, for They are persons above and beyond Buddhahood. They are the most mind-boggling of persons. In and of Themselves, They are as great as the gods.

The marvelous spiritual abilities that Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor have Transmitted are just like this. The marvelous spiritual abilities of all Buddhas are above and beyond Buddhahood. As such, They are indeed the most mind-boggling of persons and as great as the gods in and of Themselves. They are Bodhisattvas who do not 'possess' spiritual abilities. They are persons who have ended Their dependency on discriminatory thinking. They are persons who have spiritual abilities but do not act upon them. They are persons who are not hindered by anything that arises. The Buddha's Way, right now, has the six marvelous spiritual abilities. All Buddhas have habitually Transmitted and kept to Them for ever so long. There is not even one Buddha who has failed to Transmit and keep to Them, for if such a one did not Transmit and keep to Them, he would not be a Buddha. These six marvelous spiritual abilities of the Buddhas make Their senses clear so that the six sense gates leave no traces.

As someone of old said in verse about Buddhas leaving no trace:

> *Their wondrous spiritual functioning through Their six senses will be both empty and not empty*
> *And the halo of light of Their manifestation will take forms and be beyond form.*

'Their taking forms and being beyond form' will be Their leaving no traces. When, without leaving traces, we do our training and practice, explore the Matter through our training with our Master, and realize enlightenment, we do not create disturbances through our sense gates. 'Not creating disturbances' means that 'one who creates disturbances deserves thirty blows from the Master's staff'.

So, you need to thoroughly explore the six marvelous spiritual abilities through your training in accord with the preceding. Apart from the legitimate descendants in our Buddha family, who would even hear that this principle exists? Others have simply mistaken their meaningless feasting on externals for the daily behavior of returning to one's True Home. Further, even though the four stages of arhathood are common fare in the Buddha's Way, there is no academic scholar of the Scriptures who has been genuinely Transmitted. How could that bunch who are bent on counting grains of sand—those folks who are aimlessly wandering about in

delusion—possibly realize the fruits of these stages? The sort of people who are satisfied with having realized something small have not yet even come close to exploring the Matter in depth; Buddhas have Transmitted the Way only to Buddhas. The so-called 'four stages of arhathood' are synonymous with receiving and retaining a four-line Dharma poem. What we call 'receiving and retaining a four-line Dharma poem' is our eyes, ears, nose, and tongue all being undefiled by the various material and immaterial things that arise. 'Being undefiled' means 'not being stained with desires'. 'Not being stained with desires' refers to our everyday mind: it is our continually cutting through whatever arises here and now. The genuine Transmission of the six marvelous spiritual abilities and the four stages of arhathood within the Buddha's Way has been like this. If teaching is in any way different from this, you must recognize that it is not the Buddha Dharma. Thus, the Buddha's Way is invariably arrived at through the function of one's marvelous spiritual abilities. Who could possibly doubt that, in arriving There, a drop of water swallows and spews forth a vast ocean, and a speck of dust picks up, and lets go of, a lofty mountain? These are simply one's marvelous spiritual abilities, and nothing else.

Given to the assembly at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple, on the sixteenth day of the eleventh lunar month in the second year of the Ninji era (December 19, 1241).

Copied by me in the office of the Abbot's chief assistant at Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province on the first day of mid-spring in the second year of the Kangen era (March 11, 1244).

Ejō

25

On the Great Realization

(Daigo)

Translator's Introduction: The great realization of which Dōgen speaks in this discourse does not refer to an intellectual understanding of what the Buddhas and Ancestors have taught but to the direct experience of one's True Nature, hence his describing it as being 'great'. In a few contexts, the more familiar words 'enlightenment' and 'awakening' have been used to render the term *go* in the title, which in Japanese fashion is read as *satori*, the colloquial equivalent for the more technical term *kenshō,* 'the encountering of one's True Nature', both words referring to a knowing that arises only from direct experience.

The Great Way that Buddha after Buddha has Transmitted has continued on without interruption, and the merits of training that Ancestor after Ancestor has revealed have spread far and wide. As a result, having fully manifested the great realization and having attained the Way without necessarily realizing that They have done so, They reflect on what They have realized and take delight in it. Then, emerging from Their realization, They let go of it and act freely, for this is what the everyday life of Buddhas and Ancestors is. They have the twenty-four hours of the day, which They use for whatever needs to be taken up; They have the twenty-four hours of the day, which They use for whatever needs to be laid aside. And They take delight in mudballs, as well as in Their heartfelt and spirited commitment, which this skeleton key has opened.[1] From the time of Their great realization on, Buddhas and Ancestors invariably go to the ultimate in Their spiritual training and exploration, which fully manifests in this manner. At the same time, the full attainment of the great realization is not to be construed as what a Buddha or an Ancestor is, nor is one's fully being a Buddha or an Ancestor to be construed as attaining the great realization in full. The Buddhas and Ancestors spring forth from

1. A mudball is often used in Zen Buddhist texts as a metaphor for one's Buddha Nature, whereas 'taking delight in Their heartfelt and spirited commitment' refers to single-minded practice.

   Kanreisu, translated here as 'skeleton key', refers to a special key that is used to open a gateway (here, the gateway to spiritual liberation and freedom) or to a device for resolving the fundamental spiritual question (namely, the matter of life and death). In the present context, it alludes to someone using the key as a device for accessing spiritual delight.

the bounds of the great realization, and the great realization is one's Original Face that springs forth from a place above and beyond 'Buddha' and 'Ancestor'.

At the same time, the inborn abilities of human beings are of many kinds. For instance, there are those who innately know what life really is. Once born, they free themselves from the sufferings and delusions of living. That is, through their own bodily existence they thoroughly master what life really is, beginning, middle, and end. And there are those who realize the Truth through learning. They undertake study and ultimately master themselves. In other words, they thoroughly exhaust the skin and flesh, bones and marrow of learning. And there are those who know what Buddha is. They go beyond those who realize the Truth through living and those who realize the Truth through learning. They transcend the bounds of self and other, are unbounded in the here and now, and are beyond having opinions when it comes to knowing self and other. That is to say, they have a knowledge that has no teacher. They are not dependent on a good spiritual friend, nor on Scriptural writings, nor on the nature of things, nor on external forms; they do not try to open up and turn themselves around, nor do they try to be interdependent with others; rather, they are completely transparent, with nothing hidden. Of these various types, do not conclude that one is smart and another dull. Each type fully manifests the merits from their training.

As a consequence, you would do well to explore through your training whether there are any beings, sentient or non-sentient, who cannot come to know the Truth simply by living their daily life. Any who have come to know the Truth through living life will have come to realize that Truth as the result of their living an everyday life. Once they have awakened to the Truth, they will reveal It in their everyday lives as they do their training and practice throughout their lives. Thus, the Buddhas and Ancestors, who are already Trainers and Tamers of Human Beings,[2] have come to be called 'Those who have fully realized what life really is' because They have fully grasped what realization means. It will be <u>your</u> realization of what life is that leads you to partake of the great realization, because it will manifest from your study of Their realization.

Accordingly, They have experienced the great realization by accepting the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form; They have realized the great realization by accepting all the hundreds of things that sprout up; They have realized the great realization by accepting the four elements;* They have realized

2. 'Trainer and Tamer of Human Beings' is one of the ten epithets by which Shakyamuni Buddha is known.

* See *Glossary.*

the great realization by accepting the Buddhas and Ancestors; They have realized the great realization by accepting Their own spiritual question. All of Them, altogether, have accepted the great realization, and experienced the great realization as well. The very moment when realization occurs is 'the now'.

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Rinzai Gigen once said, "Were we to search great T'ang China for a single person who was not enlightened, it would be difficult to find that one." Now what Great Master Rinzai is saying here is the very Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of the genuine lineage, so there is no reason to expect that it is erroneous. What he calls 'in great T'ang China' means 'everywhere his eyes can see'. And it has no connection with 'the whole universe', nor is it limited to some tiny bit of land. If we seek in any concrete place for a single person who is not enlightened, it will be difficult to find that one. The self that was one's self yesterday was not unenlightened, and the self that is another's self today is not unenlightened. Should you seek among the mountaineers or fisherfolk of past or present, ultimately you will still not find any who are unenlightened. Should you trainees explore Rinzai's words in this manner, you will not have spent your time in vain.

Even so, you should also explore through your training the intentions of the Ancestors of our Sōtō Zen tradition. In short, just for the moment, I would like to discuss something with Rinzai: If you, Rinzai, know only that an unenlightened person is hard to find and do not know that an enlightened person is also hard to find, this is still not enough to be affirmed, and it is difficult to say that you have thoroughly explored even the matter of an unenlightened person being hard to find. Even though, in seeking for someone who is not enlightened, it is hard to find even one, did you ever encounter a person who was half-enlightened, and whose countenance and genial demeanor were impressive in their openness? Even though, in your seeking for one person in great T'ang China who was unenlightened, you found it difficult to find even one, do not consider this to be the end of the matter. You should have tried looking for two or three great T'ang Chinas within a single person or within half a person. Is such a one difficult to find? Is such a one not difficult to find? When someone is in possession of the chief purpose for which we train, that person can be trusted as a thoroughly enlightened Ancestor of the Buddha.

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Kegon Kyūjō was a Dharma heir of Tōzan. Kyūjō was his personal name. A monk once asked him, "What is it like when a

> person who has experienced the great realization returns to being deluded?"
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> The Master replied, "A broken mirror does not shed its light again: it would be difficult for a fallen blossom to climb back up on the tree."

This question is indeed the essential question, and it provides an excellent opportunity for giving Teaching to one's community. Had this question not been raised in the assembly at Kegon Monastery, it would not have been expounded, and had it not been answered by one of Tōzan's Dharma heirs, the response would not have been so inspired. This must truly be the training monastery of a fully enlightened Ancestor of the Buddha.

As to a person who has experienced the great realization, we cannot say that the great realization has been with that person from the outset, nor has that person, upon experiencing the great realization, stored it up somewhere outside or apart from himself, nor is the great realization something encountered in the human world only by those who are in the last stages of old age. Such a person does not forcibly drag it out of himself, yet, without fail, such a one experiences the great realization. Such a one does not treat merely an absence of delusion as the great realization. Neither does such a one aim at becoming a deluded person first so that he may then plant and sprout the seeds of the great realization. Moreover, although a person of great realization experiences the great realization, a person of great delusion also experiences the great realization. Just as there are persons of great realization, so there are Buddhas of great realization, and there is earth, water, fire, wind, and space in the great realization, and there are pillars* of the temple and stone lanterns* in the great realization. We are now raising questions about those who have experienced the great realization. The question about those who have experienced the great realization being capable of reverting to delusion is asking something that truly needs to be asked. And Kegon does not shun the issue, for he cherishes the old ways in monastery life, since they are the meritorious ways of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

Let us focus for the moment on the following questions: When one who has experienced the great enlightenment reverts to delusion, will that person be exactly the same as one who has not experienced the great realization? At the time when one who has experienced the great enlightenment reverts to delusion, does that person take the great realization and make it into something delusory? Does the person revert to delusion by taking some delusion from within someone or someplace else and then use it to cover up his great realization? Also, does the person who has experienced the great realization as a whole person, then destroy his great realization when he reverts to delusion? And also, does what is called 'the

reversion to delusion of a person who has experienced the great realization' treat the holding onto an instance of great realization as being a reversion to delusion? You need to explore these questions thoroughly, one by one. Further, is it the great realization on the one hand and a reverting to delusion on the other hand? Be that as it may, you need to know that, in your commitment to your spiritual exploration through training, you will learn that a person who has experienced the great realization has reversions to delusion. You need to know that the great realization and reversion to delusion are intimately connected matters.

Accordingly, 'taking a thief to be our child' does not describe 'reverting to delusion', nor does 'taking our child to be a thief' describe 'reverting to delusion'. The great realization will be 'taking a thief to be a thief', whereas reverting to delusion is 'taking our child to be our child'. 'Adding a bit too much to what is large' is the great realization, whereas 'taking a bit away from what is little' is what reverting to delusion is. As a consequence, when we search for and try to comprehend a person who has reverted to delusion, we will encounter someone who has experienced the great realization. We need to carefully scrutinize, right now, whether we ourselves are deluded or not, for it is by this that we humbly encounter the Buddhas and Ancestors.

> The Master said, "A broken mirror does not shed its light again:
> it would be difficult for a fallen blossom to climb back up on the tree."

This instruction to his assembly applies to the very moment when the mirror shatters.[3] However, it is not helpful to devote one's mind to the time when the mirror has not yet been shattered and then focus on exploring the phrase 'a broken mirror'. Now, some of you may understand the main point of Kegon's remark about a broken mirror not shedding its light again and it being difficult for a fallen blossom to climb back up on the tree as his asserting that someone who has experienced the great realization does not revert to delusion again. And you may express this by saying that someone who has experienced the great realization does not lose his light again and that someone who has experienced the great realization finds it difficult to climb back up on the tree of self. But Kegon's assertion goes beyond your exploring the Matter* in this manner. And some of you may think that the monk is asking something akin to, "What is the everyday life of a person who has experienced the great realization like?" to which the reply might be, "There are times when one reverts to delusion." But the original account is not like this.

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3. That is, we are now to understand the phrase 'a broken mirror' as 'a mirror breaking' and 'a fallen flower' as 'a flower falling'.

What the monk is asking is, "What is it like at the time when a person who has experienced the great realization reverts to delusion?" and therefore he is asking for clarification about the very moment of reverting to delusion. The Master's remark that "a broken mirror does not shed its light again: it would be difficult for a fallen blossom to climb back up on the tree" fully expresses such a moment as this. When a fallen blossom is just a fallen blossom, even though it may have floated up to the top of a hundred-foot pole, it is still a fallen blossom. Because a broken mirror is just a broken mirror right here and now, even though it may reflect a bit of life, it will be not be able to shed its light again. Taking up the points expressed as 'a broken mirror' and 'a fallen blossom', you should explore the moment when someone who has experienced the great realization reverts to delusion. At that moment, the great realization is like becoming Buddha, and reverting to delusion is akin to being an ordinary human being. And this statement is not something that we should study as if we were speaking of 'returning to being an ordinary human being' or speaking of 'leaving behind traces whilst submitting oneself to the Source'.

Others may assert something to the effect that, when people act contrary to their great realization, they become ordinary human beings, but we are not saying here that their great realization is violated, or that their great realization has vanished, or that delusion has arrived. We must not let ourselves think the way these ordinary people do. Truly, the great realization is boundless, and the reversion to delusion is boundless. There is no delusion that obstructs the great realization; for every three instances of the great realization that come along, we may create half an instance of slight delusion. On account of this, there are snow-capped mountains that undergo the great realization for the sake of snow-capped mountains, as well as trees and stones undergoing the great realization by borrowing from trees and stones.[4]

The great realization of all Buddhas is Their attaining the great realization for the sake of sentient beings: the great realization of sentient beings is their attaining the great realization of all Buddhas. This realization will not be connected with what came before or with what will come after. The great realization at this very moment is beyond self and beyond other. It is not something that comes to us from somewhere outside, yet it fills in the ditches and fills up the valleys

4. 'Snow-capped mountains' is often used in Zen Buddhism as a reference to those who have been successfully training for a long time. Similarly, 'trees' are trainees who have not yet cut down the tree of self, and 'stones' are trainees who are now unresponsive to the arising of defiling passions.

everywhere. It is not something that departs from us, yet it is incompatible with any pursuit after some ‘other’. And why is that? Because it has departed from chasing after whatever is ‘other’.

> The monk Keichō Beiko had a monk go ask Kyōzan, “Do people nowadays even attempt to make use of the great realization?”
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> Kyōzan replied, “While spiritual realization is not nonexistent, the question is how can we avoid relegating it to a matter of secondary importance?”
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> The monk went back and reported this to Beiko. Beiko committed himself to exploring this deeply.

The ‘nowadays’ of which the monk spoke is the ever-present now. Although we think in terms of past, present, and future thousands of myriad times, all such thoughts arise only in the present moment. Unquestionably, each person lives in the now. And sometimes it is their Eye that arises in the present, and sometimes it is their Nose that arises in the present.

> “Do people nowadays even attempt to make use of the great realization?”

We need to examine these words slowly and carefully, allowing them to penetrate our feelings and our thoughts. In present-day Great Sung China, shaven-headed dolts, among others, go around saying, “The path to spiritual realization is my fundamental aim.” Talking like this, they vainly wait around for spiritual realization. But they are not illumined by the Light of the Buddhas and Ancestors. They indolently stumble about instead of going and training under a genuine good spiritual friend. Even when the ancient Buddha was in the world, they would not have freed themselves from suffering and delusion.

The present question as to whether people attempt to make use of the great realization is not saying that spiritual realization does not exist, nor is it saying that it does exist, nor is it saying that it comes to one from elsewhere. It is saying, “Do they attempt to make use of it?” It was as though he had said, “The spiritual realization of people nowadays has somehow been realized.” For instance, had he said that someone has attained a spiritual realization, it would sound as if it had not continually existed. Had he said that a spiritual realization had come to someone, it would sound as if that spiritual realization had continually existed somewhere else. Had he said that someone had become spiritually awakened, it would sound as if spiritual realization had a beginning. He did not speak of it like this and it is not

like this. Even so, when he spoke of what spiritual realization is really like, he asked whether one attempts to make use of spiritual realization.

On the other hand, in speaking of spiritual realization, Kyōzan said, "While spiritual realization is not nonexistent, the question is how can we avoid relegating it to a matter of secondary importance?" In so saying, he is stating that even that which is of secondary importance is still spiritual realization. His saying that it has become of secondary importance is as if he had said, "You have become spiritually awakened!" or "You have realized a spiritual awakening!" or "A spiritual realization has come to you!" Even to say "You have become it" or "It has come to you" states that it is a spiritual realization. As a consequence, while regretting the fact that it has been relegated to a matter of secondary importance, he seems to be denying that a matter of secondary importance exists. A matter of secondary importance which springs from spiritual realization may be taken to be genuinely of secondary importance. Accordingly, even if it were of secondary importance, even if it were one among hundreds of thousands of matters of importance, it would still be a spiritual realization. It is not true that when it is of secondary importance, it is necessarily left over from something that previously existed as a matter of primary importance. For example, while we treat the 'I' of yesterday as our 'I', yesterday we spoke of our 'I' of today as if it were a second person. Kyōzan is not saying that the spiritual realization of this very moment did not exist yesterday, nor is he asserting that it is something that just began now: this is how we explore the Matter through our training. Accordingly, the heads of some who have experienced the great realization are black, and the heads of some who have experienced the great realization are white.[5]

Given to the assembly at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple at springtime, on the twenty-eighth day of the first lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (March 1, 1242).

Copied by me on the twenty-seventh day of the first lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (March 7, 1244) in Echizen Province at the old temple of Kippō-ji where I had hung up my traveling staff, and presented it in writing to the great assembly of ordinary people as well as those in lofty positions.

I recopied this in the spring of the same year, on the twenty-first day of the third lunar month (April 29, 1244), whilst serving in the inner recesses of the training temple of Kippō-ji in Echizen Province.

Ejō

5. That is, youth (black hair) and old age (white hair) are of no relevance when it comes to experiencing the great realization.

26

On Wanshi's 'Kindly Advice for Doing Seated Meditation'

(Zazen Shin)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse Dōgen uses the term *zazen shin* in two different senses. The first is given as the title of this discourse and is the name for a poem by Meditation Master Wanshi that Dōgen quotes near the end of this work. The second sense is found at the very end of this discourse in the title of a poem by Dōgen, *The Needle of Seated Meditation*, which is based on Wanshi's poem. Dōgen's poem refers to the use of seated meditation to spur one on and to help trainees unblock themselves spiritually, just as an acupuncture needle would unblock them physically.

The word *zazen* is used by Dōgen in this discourse for two different states. The first refers to 'sitting in meditation', that is, physically sitting down in order to practice meditation. The second refers to 'seated meditation', that is, being spiritually centered no matter where one is or what one is doing, neither pushing away nor denying anything as it arises, nor clinging to anything, including some specific form of meditating. To truly do seated meditation is to be, as Dōgen says, seated Buddha.

At Kannondōri, Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple.

Right after Great Master Yakusan Igen had finished a period of meditation,[1] a certain monk asked him, "As you were sitting there all still and awesome like a mountain, what was it that you were thinking about?"

The Master answered, "What I was thinking about was based on not deliberately thinking about any particular thing."

The monk then asked, "How can what anyone is thinking about be based on not deliberately thinking about something?"

The Master replied, "It is a matter of 'what I am thinking about' not being the point."

Having heard about this state described by Great Master Yakusan, we need to investigate through our training what 'sitting as still as a mountain' means and directly Transmit this, for this is how the thorough exploration of sitting as still as a

1. Yakusan would have been sitting together with his community of monks in the Meditation Hall.

mountain is passed on through the words and ways of Buddhas. Even though it is said that the way in which Buddhas think about things while being all still and awesome like a mountain differs, Yakusan's way of putting it is certainly one way among them. It is his 'thinking about' not being based on deliberately thinking about any particular thing. It includes 'thinking about' as his Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow, and it includes 'not thinking about' as his Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow.

> The monk asked, "How can what anyone is thinking about be based on not deliberately thinking about something?"

Even though the condition of not thinking about anything in particular is of ancient vintage, how can one possibly think about it? How can thinking not go on while sitting ever so still, and why did the monk not pierce through to what goes above and beyond simply being ever so still? Had he not been as befuddled as some are in our more recent, degenerate times, he would have had the ability to persist in his inquiry into being ever so still.

> The Master replied, "It is a matter of 'what I am thinking about' not being the point."

Even though his statement, "It is a matter of 'what I am thinking about' not being the point," is a gem of clarity, in our consideration of the condition of not deliberately thinking about anything in particular, we invariably employ what he described as "'what I am thinking about' not being the point." There is a someone involved in not deliberately trying to think about something, and that someone is maintaining and supporting an I. Even though being ever so still is synonymous with that I, meditation is not merely an I thinking about something; it is the I offering up its being as still and awesome as a mountain.[2] Even though its being ever so still is being ever so still, how can its being ever so still possibly think about being ever so still?

As a consequence, being as still as a mountain is beyond the considerations of Buddhas, beyond the considerations of Dharma, beyond the considerations of having awakened, and beyond the considerations of intellectual understanding. The Matter* that Yakusan has directly Transmitted one-to-one in this way has been handed down for thirty-six generations, descending directly from Shakyamuni Buddha, and from Yakusan to Shakyamuni Buddha, there are thirty-six

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2. The 'I' to which Dōgen is referring here is not the egoistic false self, but a natural function of the right effort of sitting still.

* See *Glossary*.

generations.[3] The practice of not thinking about anything in particular has been directly Transmitted in this manner.

Despite all this, there has been befuddled and unreliable talk in recent years, saying that if a person can fully eliminate all thoughts by devotedly sitting in meditation, this is the basis for true stillness.[4] This viewpoint does not even come up to that of scholars who study the Lesser Course.* It is even inferior to the paths that the common and lofty people pursue, so how can we possibly speak of such befuddled people as folks who are exploring the Buddha Dharma? In modern-day Great Sung China, people devoted to such ways are numerous, which, lamentably, will be the destruction and ruin of the Way of the Ancestors.

Also, there is a type of person among the Chinese who says, "Doing one's utmost to sit in meditation is the essential practice, whether as a beginner or as someone who has come to training late in life." But this is not necessarily the daily behavior of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Actively walking about, as well as sitting, was Their meditation practice. Their body was quiet and tranquil whether They were speaking or silent, moving about or inactive, so don't you depend solely upon that method just now quoted. Many of the folks who call themselves followers of Rinzai are of that limited view. Someone has been remiss in passing on to them the awakened life of the Buddha Dharma, and so they speak in that way. What <u>is</u> a 'beginner'? What person is not a beginner? And where do such folks find a beginner's attitude of mind?

Keep in mind that, in our thorough investigation of what has been established for exploring the Way, we do our utmost to put our seated meditation into practice. This practice has, as its main point, our "acting as a Buddha without pursuing 'becoming a Buddha.'"[5] Moreover, because 'acting as a Buddha' is beyond 'becoming a Buddha', our spiritual question manifests before our very eyes. Again, our emulation of Buddha is beyond becoming a Buddha, so that when we break up the nets and cages that confine us, our sitting like a Buddha sits does not hinder our becoming a Buddha. Right at such a moment of sitting still, there is the strength that has been present for thousands of times, nay, for tens of thousands of times, to enter into being either a Buddha or a demon. And our stepping forward

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3. That is, when we look forward from Shakyamuni, Yakusan is an Ancestor, and when we look back to Shakyamuni from our present position, Yakusan is a Buddha.

4. That is, such befuddled persons take 'blissing out' to be the true goal of meditation.

5. 'Acting as a Buddha' implies living one's daily life in accord with the Precepts and as a moment-by-moment meditation, without adding some goal like 'becoming a Buddha'.

or stepping back is intimately connected with our capability to fill in the ditches, even to fill in the valleys.

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> While Baso Dōitsu was training under Meditation Master Nangaku Ejō, he privately received the Mind seal.* One day while Baso was sitting in meditation, Nangaku came to where he was and asked him, "O great virtuous one, what is the aim of your sitting in meditation?"[6]

This question needs to be calmly, yet diligently, investigated, because we need to look in detail at what Nangaku might be asking. Does he have in mind that there is something above and beyond sitting in meditation? Or has there never been a practice that can be considered as more special than sitting in meditation? Or should we not aim at anything at all? Or, is he asking Baso whether some goal has manifested from his sitting in meditation at the present time? We should desire the True Dragon more than we desire the carved dragon. And we need to learn that both the carved dragon and the True Dragon possess the ability to summon up clouds and rain.[7] Do not esteem what is far off, and do not belittle what is far off; just acquaint yourself with what is far off. Do not belittle what is near at hand, and do not esteem what is near at hand; just acquaint yourself with what is near at hand. Do not treat your eyes lightly, and do not attach great importance to your eyes. And do not attach great importance to your ears, and do not treat your ears lightly. Just make your ears and your eyes sharp and clear.[8]

> Baso responded, "My aim is to become a Buddha."

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6. As other accounts of this kōan story make clear, the incident took place some considerable time after Baso had had a kenshō and had been Transmitted by Nangaku. During this interval, Baso had sat in his hut doing his meditation day after day regardless of the weather, even to the point of sitting in the deep snow that covered the floor of his hut.

7. The allusion is probably to the story of a Chinese artist who was so skilled at fashioning carved dragons that they could summon up clouds and rain. One day, a real dragon showed up in his studio and the experience totally overwhelmed him. The carved dragon referred to here is an analogy for the skilled practice of sitting in meditation, whereas the appearance of the True Dragon would be associated with experiencing a kenshō, which goes beyond any notions one may have of what a kenshō really is.

8. The eyes are associated with clearly seeing the way things are, whereas the ears are associated with accurately understanding what things truly are.

We need to arrive at a clear understanding of what Baso is saying here. When he speaks of becoming a Buddha, what exactly does he mean? Is he asserting that becoming a Buddha means being made into a Buddha by a Buddha? Or is he asserting that becoming a Buddha means making a Buddha into a Buddha? Or is he asserting that becoming a Buddha is the emergence of one or two aspects of a Buddha? Is his aiming to become a Buddha the result of his having dropped off body and mind, or is his aiming at becoming a Buddha itself the dropping off of his body and mind? Or is he asserting that aiming at becoming a Buddha is tangled up with one's aims, despite the fact that becoming a Buddha applies to all things?

Keep in mind that what Baso is saying is that his sitting in meditation is certainly done with the goal of becoming a Buddha, and that his sitting in meditation is certainly done with the wish to become a Buddha. Such a wish can precede becoming a Buddha, and it can arise after becoming a Buddha, and it can arise at the very moment of becoming a Buddha. To question a bit further, how many instances of becoming a Buddha has this single wish entangled? And this entanglement can become entwined with other entanglements. At such a time, the entanglements involved in cases of completely becoming a Buddha are, beyond doubt, directly related to 'completely becoming a Buddha', and, in every single case, they are due to having a goal. We should not try to avoid having a purpose. When we try to avoid having a purpose, we grieve for ourselves and lose our very life, and when we grieve for ourselves and lose our very life, it is due to our entanglement with having a goal.

> Thereupon, Nangaku picked up a roof tile and began rubbing it on a rock. Seeing this, Baso asked him, "Reverend Master, what are you doing that for?"

Truly, who would fail to see that he was polishing a tile? Even so, the question meant, "What are you going to make from polishing a tile in that way?" What he is going to make is undoubtedly a polished tile. Here and in other worlds—different though they may be—Nangaku's polishing a tile will have a significance that will never cease. It is not simply a matter of taking one's own personal view not to be a personal view: we positively ascertain that there is a purpose to all our myriad activities which we need to explore through our training and practice. Keep in mind that, just as we might not recognize or understand a Buddha when we encounter a Buddha, so when we encounter the Water we may not recognize It, or when we see a 'mountain' we may not recognize it either. And jumping to the conclusion that there can be no pathway into the Dharma that is right before one's eyes is not the way to explore the Buddha Dharma.

Nangaku said, "I am polishing the tile to make it into a Mirror."

We need to clarify the import of this statement. Nangaku undoubtedly has a reason for saying, "I am polishing the tile to make it into a Mirror," for Baso's spiritual question is fully manifesting and there cannot be false teaching. Even though a tile is a tile and a mirror is a mirror, keep in mind that there are ever so many factors involved when we strive to clarify Nangaku's reason for polishing it. Both the Ancient Mirror and the Bright Mirror will be attained through polishing a tile to make a Mirror.[9] If we do not know that all such Mirrors come from polishing a tile, we will fail to grasp what the Buddha's Ancestor was saying, we will not receive the benefit of what the Buddha's Ancestor said, and we will not experience what the Buddha's Ancestor breathed forth.

Baso then asked, "How can you possibly make a mirror by rubbing a tile?"

Truly it was the Iron Man polishing a tile,[10] without calling on the strength of anyone else, and, even so, polishing a tile does not make a mirror. Although he is just pointing to making a mirror, this pointing itself is the immediate making.[11]

Nangaku replied, "How can you possibly make yourself into a Buddha by sitting in meditation?"

It is evident that there is a reason for sitting in meditation other than 'waiting to become a Buddha': obviously, becoming a Buddha does not depend on sitting in meditation.

Baso asked, "Well, what then is the right way?"

Even though what is being said looks like an earnest question directly involving Baso at this very moment in time, it is also a question that refers to the way things are elsewhere at this very moment in time. For example, call to mind a time when a close friend encounters a close friend: his being my friend is also my being his friend. The "what?" of one and "the right way" of the other are the manifestations of both perspectives at the same time.[12]

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9. Dōgen explores this allusion in Discourse 19: On the Ancient Mirror *(Kokyō)*.

10. The 'Iron Man' is a term used to portray the level of strength and determination one needs in order to be successful in one's training.

11. That is, making a physical mirror takes time, whereas spiritually 'making a mirror' is instantaneous.

12. The 'close friends' are disciple and Master: when the disciple asks his or her spiritual question (the "what?"), the Master supplies the direction for the disciple to look in (the

> Nangaku said, "It is like someone who has hitched up his cart. If the cart is not moving, is prodding the cart the right thing to do or is prodding the ox the right thing to do?"

Now then, as to his words "if the cart is not moving," what does 'the cart's moving' mean, and what does 'the cart's not moving' mean? For instance, is the water's flowing synonymous with the cart's moving?[13] Is the water's not flowing synonymous with the cart's moving? We could say that flowing is the water's not moving. It could even be that the water's moving is beyond 'flowing'. Thus, in our investigating his saying "if the cart is not moving," even when there is 'no movement', we need to explore the Matter through our training with a Master, and even when there is not 'no movement', we still need to explore the Matter with a Master, because there will be a time for each situation. Nangaku's words "if it is not moving" go beyond his having made a one-sided assertion that some thing is not moving.

In Nangaku's saying "Is prodding the cart the right thing to do or is prodding the ox the right thing to do?" can there be both a prodding of the cart and a prodding of the ox? Will prodding the cart and prodding the ox be equivalent or not? There is no method for prodding a cart in the secular world. Although worldly people do not have a method for prodding their cart, we know that in the Buddha's Way there is a method for prodding one's cart: it is the very eyes of one's spiritual exploration through training with one's Master.

Even though we learn what methods there are for prodding a cart, they will not be the best ones for prodding an ox, a matter we should devote ourselves to examining in detail. Though methods for prodding an ox are common enough in the everyday world, we should ask about the Buddhist way of prodding an ox by exploring the Matter through our training with a Master. Is the ox we are prodding a water buffalo, or is it the Iron Ox, or is it an ox coated with mud? Will a riding crop be our prod, or will the whole universe be our prod, or will one's whole heart and mind be our prod? Should we beat it till the Marrow gushes forth, or hit it with our Fist? There will be a Fist hitting a Fist and an Ox prodding an Ox.

"right way"). Although this may appear as a sequence in a dialogue, according to Dōgen, the answer to the question of "what?" is the "What."

13. Nangaku's remark and Dōgen's commentary on it are clearly not intended to be taken on a literal level, but to be viewed within the context of Buddhist training in meditation. One possible interpretation would equate the ox with the trainee's will to train, the cart to his vehicle of training—namely, serene reflection meditation—and the water with what appears to be going on spiritually within his training.

Baso made no response to that last remark by Nangaku, something that we should not idly overlook. There was his casting aside the tile to catch a jewel: he was turning his head and changing his expression. Further, nothing and no one can rob him of his making no response.

> Nangaku, again wishing to instruct him, said, "If, as you imply, you would explore 'seated meditation', explore 'seated Buddha.'"

In exploring this statement through your training with a Master, you should, by all means, try to grasp what the pivotal moments were for the Ancestors in our lineage. If you do not know precisely what "explore 'seated meditation'" means, well, Nangaku knew it as exploring 'seated Buddha'. How could anyone possibly say that exploring 'seated meditation' is exploring 'seated Buddha' unless that person were a child or grandchild of a genuine heir? Truly, you need to recognize that a beginner's meditation is their first time of doing seated meditation, and that one's first time of doing seated meditation is the first instance of being seated Buddha.

> To explain what 'seated meditation' meant, Nangaku said, "If you would explore what 'seated meditation' is, meditation is not simply a matter of sitting or lying down."

What he is now saying is that seated meditation is doing seated meditation and is not a matter of, say, being physically seated or lying down.[14] Once we have received the direct, one-to-one Transmission that it is not a matter of sitting or lying down, our limitless acts of sitting and lying down are nevertheless what we are. What need do we have to search for whether our spiritual bloodline is within us or within someone else? Why get into discussions about delusion and enlightenment? Who would want to take up the matter of 'how to cut off defiling passions by developing wise discernment' merely as an intellectual pursuit?

> Nangaku said, "When you would investigate 'seated Buddha', you need to know that Buddha is not some set form."

When we want to express what this is getting at, this is the best way to do it. The fact that seated Buddha may manifest as one Buddha or as two Buddhas is because having no fixed form is one of Its glorious attributes. To state that Buddha has no fixed form is to state what the form of a Buddha is, and because a Buddha has no

14. That is, the 'seated' in 'seated meditation' does not refer to a physical position during meditation but to a meditative state of mind. 'Being seated or lying down' implies all four of the modes of everyday human behavior: standing, moving, sitting, and lying down.

fixed form, it is difficult to avoid being seated Buddha. Thus, because the absence of any fixed form is one of Its glorious attributes, when you investigate doing seated meditation through practice, it is your being seated Buddha.

Who within the realm of non-abiding thoughts and things would choose not to be a Buddha, and who, pray, chooses to be a Buddha? By letting go of choosing before any choice arises, one becomes seated Buddha.

> Nangaku said, "When you are seated Buddha, this then is your killing off 'Buddha.'"[15]

In your exploring 'seated Buddha' through your training with a Master, there is the spiritually beneficial act of killing off 'Buddha'. The very moment of our being seated Buddha is killing off 'Buddha'. In our attempt to seek out the fine, distinguishing marks and brilliance from killing off 'Buddha', they will undoubtedly be due to our being seated Buddha. Although the term 'to kill off' may resemble the way we speak of killing in the world, it cannot really be the same. Also, you need to explore through your training the statement that seated Buddha is killing off 'Buddha' by asking what form this might take. Taking up the point that inherent within the spiritual activity of Buddha there is the killing off of 'Buddha', we need to explore through our training whether we ourselves have killed off our false self or have not yet killed off our false self.

> "If you are clinging to some form of sitting, you will not arrive at the principle of killing off 'Buddha.'"

'Clinging to some form of sitting' means throwing away and acting contrary to the aspect of being seated. This underlying principle, as Nangaku has already stated, is that when we are 'practicing seated Buddha', it is not possible for us not to cling to some form of being seated. Even though Nangaku's saying 'clinging to some form of sitting' is a gem of clarity, when we do cling to some form of sitting, we will not arrive at the principle of killing off 'Buddha'. To kill off 'Buddha' is what I call 'the dropping off of body and mind'. Those who have not yet truly sat still do not possess this Teaching. This 'dropping off' is the moment of just sitting; it is the person who is just sitting; it is Buddha just sitting; it is learning seated Buddha. Sitting that is simply a person's sitting down or reclining is not a Buddha's just sitting. Even though a person's sitting naturally resembles a seated Buddha or a Buddha sitting, there are those persons who are becoming Buddha and there are those persons who are engaged in 'becoming a Buddha'. Even though there are

15. "Killing off 'Buddha'" would encompass dropping off any notion we might have of what Buddha really is.

people engaged in 'becoming a Buddha', not everyone has become a Buddha. A Buddha is not everyone, and because all Buddhas are not simply all people, a person is not necessarily a Buddha and a Buddha is not necessarily a person. The same holds true for being seated Buddha.

The same also holds true for Nangaku as an outstanding Master and Baso as a strong disciple. Baso is the one who realized 'becoming Buddha' by being 'seated Buddha'. Nangaku is the one who pointed to 'seated Buddha' for the sake of making a Buddha. In Nangaku's assembly, there was such marked devotion to effort, and in Yakusan's assembly, there was his Teaching concerning the nature of meditation. Keep in mind that Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor has taken being seated Buddha to be Their essential function, and They have wholeheartedly made use of this essential function. Those who have not used it are simply those who have not encountered it, not even in their dreams.

In broader terms, in both India and China, to say that the Buddha Dharma had been passed on invariably meant that seated Buddha had been passed on. This is because seated Buddha is the essential function. When the Buddha Dharma is not passed on, doing seated meditation is not passed on. What Successor after Successor has received is just this principle of doing seated meditation. Any who have not yet had this principle directly Transmitted to them are not Ancestors of the Buddha. Without illuminating this one Teaching, we will not illuminate the myriad Teachings or the myriad actions that They have taken. Whoever does not illuminate the myriad Teachings cannot be called clear and bright, and is not someone who has gained the Way, so how could such a one be an Ancestor of the Buddha either now or in the past? Therefore, we should have no doubt that the Ancestors of the Buddha have, without question, directly Transmitted, one-to-one, the practice of seated meditation.

To be illuminated by the radiance of the Buddhas and Ancestors is to devote ourselves to exploring through our training what this practice of seated meditation is. Befuddled people, misunderstanding what a Buddha's radiance is, wonder whether it could be like sunlight or moonlight, or like the play of light in a jewel, or even like the dancing of a flame. Sunlight and moonlight are merely karmic* forms arising from the turning of the wheel within the six worlds of existence:* they cannot compare with a Buddha's radiance. A Buddha's radiance is exhibited by accepting and keeping to a single verse of Scripture, by maintaining, supporting, guarding, and protecting a single Teaching, and by directly Transmitting, one-to-one, the practice of seated meditation. If people had never reached the point where they were illumined by His radiance, then maintaining and supporting this Teaching would not be possible, and no one would trust and accept It.

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Thus, even in the past there were few people who recognized that to sit in meditation means doing seated meditation. On the mountains of present-day Great Sung China, many heads of top-ranking monasteries are ignorant of seated meditation and have not learned it. There are some who have a clear understanding of it, but they are few. In these temples, the times for sitting in meditation have always been set. And all the monks, from the Abbot on down, have taken sitting in meditation as a dutiful task. To spur their trainees on, they have advised them to sit in meditation. Yet those Abbots who have actually understood the practice are few. As a result, from past times to recent generations, there have been one or two veteran monks who have recorded their mottoes for sitting in meditation, one or two veteran monks who have compiled methods for sitting in meditation, and one or two veteran monks who have set down maxims for sitting in meditation. Yet among all their mottoes for sitting in meditation, nowhere are there any that we can adopt, as their methods for sitting in meditation are ill-informed in terms of their application to daily conduct. They have been set down by people who do not know seated meditation and to whom seated meditation has not been directly Transmitted, one-to-one. Their maxims for sitting in meditation are in the *Ching-te Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, and their mottoes for sitting in meditation, among others, are in the *Chia-tai Era Record of the Lamp Whose Light Reaches Everywhere*. Even though these monks spent their whole lives making pilgrimages to Zen monasteries far and wide, how sad that they lacked the diligent effort to truly sit in meditation even once. To sit truly was not for them, and so their efforts did not lead them to encounter themselves. Their failure to truly sit in meditation was not due to any distaste for their body and mind, but to their unwillingness to make a genuine effort, so therefore they precipitously wandered off into delusion. The writings they have collected up are merely an outer show of 'coming back to the Source', or 'returning to the Origin', or convey useless methods for concentrating on one's breathing or for focusing on tranquility. These methods do not even approach the four steps of Tendai meditation: seeing into one's heart, training through meditation, taking delight in doing it, and putting it into one's daily practice. Nor do they approach the perspective of the ten bodhisattva* stages leading to Buddhahood. So how could they possibly have received the direct, one-to-one Transmission of the seated meditation of Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor? Scribes in the Sung dynasty were wrong

to record such writings, and we present-day trainees should set them aside and not even look at them.[16]

Only the kindly advice for seated meditation compiled by Meditation Master Wanshi Shōgaku, the Abbot of Keitoku-ji Temple on Mount Tendō in Keigen Prefecture in Great Sung China, is the Teaching of a true Ancestor of the Buddha: it is the acupuncture needle of seated meditation and is right for realizing the Way. It alone has a radiance that lights up the inside and outside of the realms of thoughts and things. Wanshi is an Ancestor of the Buddha for past and present Ancestors of the Buddha. Earlier and later Buddhas have been spurred on by this needle of his. Ancestors of the present and Ancestors of the past have come forth from this needle. And here is this very needle of seated meditation.

My Friendly Advice for Seated Meditation
Compiled by Meditation Master Wanshi Shōgaku

The important function for Buddha after Buddha
And the pivotal moment for Ancestor after Ancestor
Is to know It without 'stirring anything up'
And to be illumined without setting up an opposite.

When one knows It without stirring anything up,
Such knowing is naturally humble:
When one is illumined without setting up an opposite,
Such illumination is naturally subtle.

Since that knowing is naturally humble,
There is never a discriminating thought:
Since that illumination is naturally subtle
There is never the least outward sign of It.

Since there is never a discriminating thought,
That knowing is wondrous, with nothing left to be dealt with:
Since there is never the least outward sign of It,
That illumination is complete, with nothing left unrealized.

16. The works Dōgen is referring to all have the word *zazen* in their titles and might mislead his disciples to assume that 'seated meditation', as Dōgen is using the term, is what those works are talking about.

The water is now so clear you can see to its depths,
As fish swim by at their leisure:
The sky is now so clear it is boundless,
As birds fly off, leaving no trace.

The point of this needle of seated meditation is the Great Function which manifests before our very eyes. It is our everyday behavior when we look beyond words and forms. It is our glimpsing That which existed 'before "father" and "mother" was born'.* It is our seeing that it is good not to slander Ancestors of the Buddha. It is our never avoiding the chance to let go of self and to cast away body and mind. It is our having a head as large as a Buddha's seated upon the neck of an ordinary person.

The important function for Buddha after Buddha

Beyond doubt, Buddha after Buddha has treated Buddha after Buddha as the important function: when that important function has manifested, that is what seated meditation is.

The pivotal moment for Ancestor after Ancestor

My former Master went beyond using such words as these. The principle underlying this is just what 'Ancestor after Ancestor' means. It involves the Transmission of the Teaching and the Transmission of the robe. In general, every single instance of turning one's head and changing one's expression is what the essential function of Buddha after Buddha has been. And every single case of changing one's expression and turning one's head is what the pivotal moment has been for Ancestor after Ancestor.

To know It without stirring anything up

'To know' does not mean 'to perceive', for our perceptions are a small gauge of It. Nor is this the knowing associated with intellectual understanding, for intellectual understanding is but a mental construct. Hence, 'to know' is 'to not stir things up', for when we do not stir things up, we 'know'. Do not broadmindedly judge it to be something everyone knows and do not narrow-mindedly limit it to one's own personal knowledge. That phrase, 'not stirring things up', is equivalent to saying, "When clear-mindedness comes, be clear-minded, and when dark-mindedness comes, be dark-minded."[17] It is the same as saying, "By sitting, to break through the skin that our mother bore."

17. 'Clear-mindedness' refers to those times when the darkness of ignorance has cleared away; 'dark-mindedness' refers to other times when we cannot see our way clearly.

To be illumined without setting up an opposite

This 'being illumined' is not the 'being illumined' associated with being completely out in the open, nor is it 'spiritual illumination'. Rather, it is our not setting up opposing conditions that constitutes being illumined. Illumination does not change into a condition, because conditions are the very things illuminated. 'Not setting up opposites' means that, throughout the universe, there has never been anything hidden and that a shattered world does not stick out its head. It is what is humble, it is what is subtle, and it is what is beyond being interdependent or independent.

Since that knowing is naturally humble,
There is never a discriminating thought

This means knowing what discriminating thinking is, without necessarily having to make use of some external assistance. This knowing is of a concrete form and that concrete form is of mountains and rivers. These mountains and rivers are humble. This humility is subtle. Our making use of this knowing is as lively and free-moving as fish swimming about in water. Our becoming a dragon does not depend on our being on one side of Emperor Yü's Gate or the other.[18] To straightaway employ even a single instance of this knowing is to make use of a pinch of the whole world with its mountains and rivers, and, exerting our whole strength, to know. If what we know lacks the familiarity of mountains and rivers, we will not have a single instance of true knowing or even half an understanding of It. We should not regret that discriminative wisdom has come to us late, since Buddha after Buddha has been fully manifested by means of it. 'There is never' means 'already'. 'Already' means 'discriminative wisdom has fully manifested'. Thus, 'there is never a discriminating thought' means that not even a single person has been encountered.[19]

Since that illumination is naturally subtle
There is never the least outward sign of It

'The least' refers to 'the whole universe'. Even so, this illumination is naturally

18. Emperor Yü's Gate—also known as the Dragon Gate—is a gorge on the Yangtze River. Legend has it that any fish swimming up through the gorge turns into a dragon. This was used as a metaphor for someone who succeeded in passing the difficult imperial civil service examination. To paraphrase Dōgen's remark, those who are truly doing seated meditation are 'seated Buddha', whether they realize it or not. They do not need to pass some examination to prove their being 'seated Buddha'.

19. That is, 'self and other' has been transcended.

subtle. This is why it is as if it had not yet come about. Do not doubt your eyes and do not trust your ears.[20] Clarify through direct experience what the Principle is that lies beyond deliberative thinking, and do not grab hold of some criterion of what It is by relying on how it is worded: this is what being illumined is. This is why there is no duality: this is why there is nothing to grab hold of. It is to say, in effect, "While keeping to the view that this experience is rare and relying on its being complete, I still harbor doubts."[21]

The water is now so clear you can see to its depths,
As fish swim by at their leisure

'The Water is clear' does not mean that the water connected with the sky is the Clear Water that one can see to Its very depths. Still less is the Water of 'the Water is clear' that which thoroughly cleanses things in the outer, material realm. The Water which is unbounded by any bank or shore, That is the immaculate Water which one penetrates to Its very depths. When fish swim by through this Water, there is nowhere that they may not go. Even though their swimming may progress for who knows how many myriad miles, It is immeasurable and It knows no limit. There is no bank to measure It by, and there is no space in which It floats. Being without a bottom to sink to, there is no one who can measure It. Even were one to discuss various ways of measuring It, It is simply the immaculate Water whose depths can be seen. The meritorious act of seated meditation is like this swimming of fish. Who can reckon what a thousand miles or ten thousand miles are? The action of going down to the very bottom is synonymous with our not trying to trace some bird's trackless path.

The sky is now so clear it is boundless,
As birds fly off, leaving no trace

'The Sky is clear' is something unconnected with the heavens. The emptiness connected with the heavens is not the Clear Sky. Even less does That which pervades everywhere—be it in this place or in that—refer to the clear sky. What is not hidden or revealed either inside or out is what 'the Clear Sky' is.

When birds fly through this Sky, this is just one method of 'flying through the Sky'. The action of flying through the Sky is beyond anything we can measure. Flying through the Sky is the whole universe, because the whole universe is flying through the Sky. Even though we do not know what the extent of this flying is, in

20. That is, do not doubt your direct experience of It and do not rely on your understanding of how someone else has described It.

21. That is, I doubt that I 'know it all'.

asserting it with a statement that is beyond some form of reckoning, Wanshi asserted it as "flying off, leaving no trace." It means "being able to go straight off, having no strings tying down one's feet."[22] When the Sky is flying off, the birds are also flying off. When the birds are flying off, the Sky too is flying off. Among the sayings which thoroughly explore 'flying off' is the one that says, "Only here do we exist." This is the acupuncture needle of being ever so still. How many thousands of journeys have vied to tell us, "Only here do we exist?" This is Meditation Master Wanshi's kindly advice for doing seated meditation.

Among the maxims for doing seated meditation by veteran monks over the generations, there have not been any like this one of his. If any stinking skin bags* anywhere wished to state the Matter like this needle of seated meditation has, even if they exhausted their strength for one or two lifetimes, they would not be able to do so. Its likes are not to be seen anywhere today. Wanshi's needle stands alone.

When my former Master was giving Teaching in the Lecture Hall, he would constantly be remarking, "My Old Buddha Wanshi!" He never spoke like this about anyone else. When we have the Eye to recognize 'such a person',* we will also recognize the sound of an Ancestor of the Buddha. We need to remember that this Ancestor of the Buddha existed in Tōzan's lineage.[23] It is now some eighty years since Meditation Master Wanshi's death. Having encountered his kindly advice for doing seated meditation, I have compiled my own needle of seated meditation. It is now the eighteenth day of the third lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (April 19, 1242). When I reckon the time from his death on the eighth day of the tenth lunar month in the twenty-seventh year of the Shōkō era (1157) to the present year, it is just short of eighty-five years. The needle of seated meditation that I have now compiled is as follows:

The Needle of Seated Meditation

The important function for Buddha after Buddha
And the pivotal moment for Ancestor after Ancestor
Is to let It manifest without deliberately thinking about anything
And to realize It without creating complications.

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22. A quote from Master Tōzan, alluding to the practice of tying down the feet of captured birds to prevent their flying away.

23. Wanshi was a Dharma heir of Tanka Shijun, who was in Tōzan Ryōkai's line. Dōgen's Master was a direct descendant of Chōryo Seiryō, Tanka Shijun's other Dharma heir.

When one lets It manifest without thinking about anything,
Such a manifestation is naturally close to us:
When one realizes It without creating complications,
Such a realization is naturally a direct experience.

When that manifestation is naturally close to us,
There is not the least bit of defilement:
When that realization is naturally a direct experience
There is not the least difference between Host and guest.

When the closeness is without the least bit of defilement,
That closeness is put aside and falls away:
When one directly experiences that there is not the least distinction between Host and guest,
Out of that experience come no set plans, as we diligently continue to train.

The water is so clear you can see down to the bottom,
As fish swim by, just as fish do:
The sky is now boundless, penetrating the heavens,
As birds fly off, just as birds do.

While Meditation Master Wanshi's advice for seated meditation is by no means incorrect, I just wanted to express the Matter in this way.

In sum, descendants of the Buddha's Ancestors need to explore through their training with their Master that seated meditation is undoubtedly the one Great Matter. This is the genuine seal that is Transmitted directly, one-to-one.

Written down at Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the eighteenth day of the third lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (April 19, 1242).

Given to the assembly at Kippō-ji Temple in Yoshida Prefecture, Etchū Province, during the winter of the eleventh month in the fourth year of the same era (December 1243).[24]

24. Dōgen's community was staying at Kippō-ji Temple while they were building Eihei-ji Temple.

27

On Experiencing That Which Is Above and Beyond Buddhahood

(Butsu Kōjō Ji)

Translator's Introduction: This discourse is one of the most opaque in the *Shōbōgenzō*, not because the underlying meaning is difficult to grasp, but because of the extensive use of Zen Buddhist metaphors. Even though 'translations' and paraphrases of these metaphorical references are supplied for most occurrences, some of these allusions would require such extensive notation to clarify the meaning for readers who are unfamiliar with them that their meaning must be left to the reader to intuit through a study of Dōgen's remarks.

The reason why this discourse has such recourse to metaphoric language is that Zen Masters were being asked to use words to describe a state that words cannot readily convey. Someone who has gone above and beyond Buddhahood has entered a realm of existence in which there is no longer the same sense of a personal identity, an identity which those who have a false sense of self take to be who they really are.

Tōzan, our Founding Ancestor from Yün-chou Province, was the direct successor and heir of Donjō of Mount Ungan in T'an-chou Province. Tōzan was an Ancestor of the thirty-eighth monastic generation descending from the Tathagata, who was the thirty-eighth Ancestor counting back from him.[1]

> There was once a time when Great Master Tōzan addressed his assembly, saying, "Once I had directly experienced That which is above and beyond Buddhahood, I had the ability to say a few words about It."
>
> Thereupon, a monk asked, "And what were the words you spoke?"
>
> The Master said, "When I spoke about It, my acharya,* you did not hear It."
>
> The monk asked, "Are you listening, Venerable Monk?"
>
> The Master said, "When I am not speaking about It, I am waiting to hear It."

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1. That is, it makes no difference whether one regards Ancestors as descending from the Tathagata or as counting back to the Tathagata, since all Ancestors are the same in essence as the Tathagata.

* See *Glossary.*

The words quoted just now about experiencing That which is above and beyond Buddhahood are those of our Ancestor, Great Master Tōzan. Other Ancestors of the Buddha have habitually explored through their training what the Great Master said and have directly experienced That which is above and beyond Buddhahood. You need to understand that experiencing That which is above and beyond Buddhahood is above and beyond any innate cause or any fulfillment of effects.[2] Even so, when the Ancestors experienced 'not hearing It when words are spoken about It', they did not fail to penetrate into the meaning of this through their training. Until you have actually arrived at That which is above and beyond Buddhahood, you will not have directly experienced That which is above and beyond Buddhahood. Until you can put It into words, you have not directly experienced That which is above and beyond Buddhahood. It is above and beyond any mutual appearance or disappearance, and It is above and beyond any mutual giving or receiving.[3] Thus, the time when what is spoken of fully manifests is the time of experiencing That which is above and beyond Buddhahood. The time when That which is above and beyond Buddhahood fully manifests is the time when the acharya fails to hear.

'The acharya not hearing' means "The experience of That which is above and beyond Buddhahood is inaudible to you," and "At the time when words are spoken, the acharya does not hear It." Keep in mind that the Master's speaking with words is not tainted by being heard or by not being heard. For this reason, speaking is not connected with hearing or not hearing.

'You, my acharya' is contained within 'what does not hear' and within 'what is put into words'. In other words, it is encountering 'such a person'* and not encountering 'such a person'; it is both 'this' and 'not this'. At the moment when the acharya is speaking, he is an acharya who is not listening. The essential meaning of 'his not listening' is his not listening by dint of his being tongue-tied, by dint of his being hindered by what is going on in his ears, by dint of his eyes being blinded by the Master's luminosity, and by dint of his being blocked up in body and mind. This is why he did not hear. Taking these points up again, we do not treat them as 'putting It into words'. Not listening goes above and beyond 'being put into words': it is simply not hearing at the time when It is put into words. From beginning to end, the Founding Ancestor's words, "When I spoke about It, my acharya, you did not hear It," are like wisteria vines relying on wisteria vines for support. Even so, it will resemble what is spoken being entwined with what is spoken; it is being obstructed by what is spoken.

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2. In other words, It is beyond training and enlightenment.

3. This sentence describes various aspects of the one-to-one Transmission that are transcended.

When the monk asked, "Are you listening, Venerable Monk?" he was saying in effect, "It is not that you, Venerable Monk, are listening to your own words, since the one who is asking the question is not the Venerable Monk, and my question goes beyond 'speaking words.'" Even so, the monk was trying to ask whether he should train himself to listen and speak simultaneously. For example, he was trying to learn whether speaking is just speaking and whether listening is just listening. And although the question had been put that way, it goes beyond the disciple's tongue to fully express.

The words of our Founding Ancestor Tōzan, "When I am not speaking about It, I am waiting to hear It," need to be studied thoroughly in order to clarify their meaning. That is, at the time of putting It into words, one is not simultaneously listening to It. Listening will fully manifest at the time when one is not speaking. It is not that one idly disregards the time of not speaking, waiting for 'not speaking' to occur. At the moment of just listening, one does not consider putting It into words to be something extraneous, because such a thought is truly something extraneous. At the time when there is just listening, it is not that speaking of It has departed and exists solely as a side issue. And at the time when there is speaking of It, it is not that 'just listening' has closely hidden itself within the eyes of the one speaking and then suddenly thunders forth. As a consequence, even if someone is the acharya, at the time when It is spoken of, that person does not hear It. Even if the someone is the 'I', the time when there is no speaking is one of just listening, and this is comparable to "I have the ability to say a few words about It" and to "I have directly experienced That which is above and beyond Buddhahood." It is, for example, the direct experience of just listening at the time when someone else is engaged in speaking about It. This is why Tōzan said, "When I am not speaking about It, I am waiting to hear It." Although he spoke thus, experiencing That which is above and beyond Buddhahood is not an experience prior to the Seven Buddhas* but an experience that is above and beyond the Seven Buddhas.

> Our Founding Ancestor Tōzan once pointed out to his assembly, "You need to know that there are people who are above and beyond Buddhahood."
>
> At the time, there was a monk who asked him, "What is a person who is above and beyond Buddhahood?"
>
> The Great Master replied, "A non-Buddha."[4]

4. That is, someone who is beyond any fixed idea of what a Buddha is.

> Ummon once commented on Tōzan's reply, "We cannot name It, nor can we describe It, so we speak of It as 'a non-.'"
>
> Hofuku once commented, "Buddha is something 'non-.'"
>
> And Hōgen once commented, "Calling upon expedient means, we call such a one a Buddha."[5]

Generally speaking, an Ancestor of the Buddha who is above and beyond being 'an Ancestor of the Buddha' would be our Founding Ancestor Tōzan. The reason for that is, even though there are many others who have the countenance of a Buddha and an Ancestor, they have not even dreamt of the term 'being above and beyond Buddhahood'. Even if it had been explained to the likes of a Tokusan or a Rinzai, they could not have attested to it through their direct experience. And even if the likes of a Gantō or a Seppō had worked their own bodies to a nubbin through training, they would never have tasted a Master's Fist.[6] Such phrases as "The direct experience of That which is above and beyond Buddhahood," "I have the ability to say a few words about It," and "You need to know that there are people who are above and beyond Buddhahood," which our Founding Ancestor spoke, cannot be mastered experientially short of training for one, two, three, four, or five triply immeasurable hundreds of great kalpas.[7] And, by all means, there will be those who have the ability to explore the Subtle Path through their training.[8]

It is imperative that you know that there are those who are above and beyond Buddhahood. In other words, theirs is a life of playing with what is left after body and mind have dropped off. Even so, we can recognize the Old Buddha by His raising of a Fist. When you have already caught sight of Him in this manner, you will know that there is Someone who is above and beyond Buddhahood, and that there is no one who is above and beyond Buddhahood.[9] What I am pointing out to the community at present is not that you must become someone who is above and

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5. That is, we call such a one a Buddha for want of a better term.

6. Both Gantō and Seppō were disciples of Tokusan.

7. That is, just short of never.

8. One of three ways taught by Tōzan for training disciples, the Subtle Path is the path by which the Master leads the trainee to a profoundly deep inner realm beyond the opposites. The next way is the Bird's Way wherein, like a bird in flight, the Master's way of training disciples moves freely and unobstructedly, leaving no karmic traces behind. The final way is Extending the Hand, whereby the Master makes use of various expedient means to guide the trainee.

9. There is 'no one' because self has dropped off.

beyond Buddhahood, nor that you must encounter someone who is above and beyond Buddhahood, but simply that you must know that there are those who are above and beyond Buddhahood. When you can grasp this fundamental point, you will no longer attempt to know whether there is someone who is above and beyond Buddhahood or whether there is no one who is above and beyond Buddhahood, for that one who is above and beyond Buddhahood is a non-Buddha. Should there be a time when some doubt arises as to what a non-Buddha is, you should consider that such a one is not called a non-Buddha because he or she existed before the historic Buddha, or because he or she came after the historic Buddha, or because he or she has transcended the historic Buddha: he or she is a non-Buddha simply because such a one has gone above and beyond Buddhahood. Such a one is called a non-Buddha because he or she has dropped off a Buddha's countenance and a Buddha's body and mind.

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> Meditation Master Jōin Koboku from the eastern capital—who was a Dharma heir of Fuyō Dōkai—once addressed his community, saying, "Once you directly know that there <u>is</u> the experience of That which is above and beyond Buddhahood, you will indeed have the ability to give voice to It. Now, my virtuous Zen monks, say right off! What is <u>your</u> experience of That which is above and beyond Buddhahood?
>
> "There is a child within the human family. His six sense organs are lacking, his seven kinds of consciousness are incomplete. He is the Great Icchantika, one lacking the seed of Buddha Nature. When he meets a Buddha, he slays 'Buddha': when he meets an Ancestor, he slays 'Ancestor'. The Celestial Halls cannot house him: even the Hells have no gateway that can hold him. O great assembly! are you acquainted with 'such a person'*?"[10]

10. In this quotation, Jōin is describing the function of Buddha Nature after someone has awakened to the Truth and gone above and beyond Buddhahood. What remains is not something outside of or apart from being a human (that is, it is 'a child within the human family'), although the distinction of being male or female is no longer relevant. Having let go of all attachment, It functions as if the six sense organs were lacking. Similarly, the conviction has dropped away that the six sense organs, the judgmental, intellective mind, and the 'awakened mind' constitute all there is to being completely awakened. As the Great Icchantika, It functions beyond conventional notions of good and evil, and lacks the seed of Buddha Nature, because It is already the fruition of Buddha Nature. Distinctions, such as

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Then, after a good long time, he said, "The one facing you now is not from Sindh. He sleeps a lot and also talks a lot in his sleep."

'His six sense organs are lacking' means that a person has exchanged his eyes for black nuts from a bo-tree, his nostrils for bamboo tubes, and his skull for a toilet spatula. Pray, what could be the underlying principle of these exchanges? It is because of this principle that his six senses are lacking. Because his six senses are lacking, he has become a Golden Buddha after having passed through the furnace, and he has become a Mud Buddha after having passed through the Great Ocean, and he has become a Wooden Buddha after having passed through fire.

'His seven kinds of consciousness are incomplete' is synonymous with a 'broken wooden ladle'.* Even though it is said that he 'slays Buddha', he encounters Buddha, and because he encounters Buddha, he slays 'Buddha'. Were he to aim at entering the Celestial Halls, the Celestial Halls would immediately collapse. Were he to encounter the Hells, the Hells would suddenly fall away. Consequently, when he comes face-to-face with someone, his face breaks out into a smile, and he asks for nothing from Sindh.[11] He sleeps a lot and also talks a lot in his sleep. Keep in mind that the principle of this is that 'both the mountains know themselves and the earth knows itself' and that 'the whole body of jewels and stones are smashed into hundreds of pieces'. You should take your time to explore through your training what Meditation Master Koboku pointed out to his assembly. Do not do it hastily.

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When Dōyō of Mount Ungo went to train under Tōzan, who was the Founding Ancestor of our lineage, Tōzan asked him, "O acharya, what is your name?"[12]

Ungo responded, "Dōyō."

'Buddha' and 'Ancestor', have been done away with, because they are inherently dualistic and no longer relevant. Finally, the worlds of existence, such as heavenly and hellish states, do not restrict It.

11. 'Something from Sindh' is a metaphor for asking for the very best someone can offer that is appropriate to the situation; here, the reference is to not asking for anything from another. Dōgen will take up this metaphor in Discourse 79: On 'The King Requests Something from Sindh' *(Ō Saku Sendaba).*

12. In some Zen Buddhist contexts, such as the present one, acharya is simply a polite form of address for any monk, since in a monastery a monk may learn from any of his fellow trainees.

> The Founding Ancestor then said to him, "Speak again, but from a place above and beyond the conventional."
>
> Ungo responded, "Were I to speak from a place above and beyond the conventional, then this 'I' would not be called Dōyō."
>
> Tōzan said, "When I was with Ungan, what I answered him was in no way different."

We certainly need to look in detail at what the Master and disciple are now saying. "Were I to speak from a place above and beyond the conventional, then this 'I' would not be called Dōyō" was Dōyō's speaking from above and beyond Buddhahood. You need to explore through your training that, in the Dōyō who had just come, there is That which is not called Dōyō and which is above and beyond 'Dōyō'. At the time when he manifested the principle of "Were I to speak from a place above and beyond the conventional, then this 'I' would not be called Dōyō," he was the True Dōyō. Even so, do not say that he would be Dōyō even in a place above and beyond the conventional. When he heard the Founding Ancestor's words, "Speak again, but from a place above and beyond the conventional," were he to have said, "Speaking from a place above and beyond the conventional, I am nevertheless named Dōyō," this would still be his speaking from a place above and beyond the conventional. And why do I say so? Because Dōyō, in a twinkling, has leapt into the True Dōyō's brain and concealed himself there. Although we say that he has concealed himself there, he openly reveals his True Form.

> When Sōzan Honjaku went to train under our Founding Ancestor Tōzan, the latter asked him, "O acharya, what is your name?"
>
> Sōzan replied, "Honjaku."
>
> The Founding Ancestor said, "Speak again, but from a place above and beyond the conventional."
>
> Sōzan responded, "I cannot say it."
>
> The Founding Ancestor asked, "Why on earth can't you say it?"
>
> Sōzan responded, "Because It is not called Honjaku."
>
> The Founding Ancestor approved of this response.

I would comment that it is not that there are no words in that place above and beyond Buddhahood, it is just a matter of "I cannot say it." Why does he not say it? Because his True Self is not called Honjaku. Since this is so, the words from the place that is above and beyond are not spoken, and the unspoken words of that place above and beyond are unnamed, and the unnamed Honjaku is a term from that place above and beyond. As a result, Honjaku is unnamed. Since this is so,

there is a non-Honjaku, there is the Unnamed which has dropped everything off, and there is a Honjaku that has been dropped off.

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Meditation Master Banzan Hōshaku once said, "Among thousands of saintly persons, none have Transmitted the one path to That Which is Above and Beyond." The phrase 'the one path to That Which is Above and Beyond' is the wording of Banzan alone. He did not speak of what is above and beyond, nor did he speak of those who are above and beyond; he spoke of the one path to That Which is Above and Beyond. His main point is that even though thousands of saintly ones may have come forth in great profusion, they have not Transmitted the one path to That Which is Above and Beyond. 'To not Transmit' can also mean that the thousands of saintly ones have preserved a part of something that is above and beyond being Transmitted. We can study the Matter* in this way too. And there is still something more that needs to be said: thousands of saintly ones and thousands of wise ones do indeed exist, and even so, wise and saintly though they may be, the one path to That Which is Above and Beyond is above and beyond the realm of the wise and saintly.

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> Meditation Master Chimon Kōso was once asked by a monk, "What is this thing about 'That which is above and beyond Buddhahood?'"
>
> The Master answered, "I hold the sun and moon aloft atop my staff."

That is, his saying that one's staff holds aloft the sun and moon is the same as 'experiencing going above and beyond Buddhahood'. When we explore through our training the staff of the sun and moon, then the whole universe is thrown into darkness, which is our going above and beyond Buddhahood. And it is not that the sun and moon are the staff: what is atop the head of the staff is what is atop the whole staff.

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> Meditation Master Dōgo of Tennō-ji Temple, while still a novice in the assembly of Kisen, asked, "What <u>is</u> the Great Intent of Buddha Dharma?"

> Master Sekitō replied, "It is above and beyond anything that can be grasped, above and beyond anything that can be comprehended."
>
> Dōgo asked, "As you have gone above and beyond, is there any other way you have of putting It?"
>
> The Master replied, "The vast expanse of space does not hinder the white clouds as they float by."

As I see the matter, Sekitō was a second-generation descendant of Daikan Enō. The monk Dōgo of Tennō-ji was a younger monastic brother of Yakusan. There was the time when he asked, "What <u>is</u> the Great Intent of Buddha Dharma?" This question is not one that beginners or those who have entered training late in life are equal to. This can only be asked when someone has already heard of the Great Intent and been able to understand what It is.

Sekitō responded, "It is above and beyond anything that can be grasped, above and beyond anything that can be comprehended." You need to know that within the Buddha Dharma, the Great Intent exists at our first moment of spiritual awareness and It exists at the stage of our ultimate, full awakening. That Great Intent is not something to be grasped. Giving rise to the intention to train, doing the training and practice, and realizing the Truth do indeed exist, and they too are not something to be grasped. That Great Intent is not something to be comprehended. Training-and-enlightenment does indeed exist <u>and</u> training-and-enlightenment is not some 'thing' that exists, for it is not anything to be grasped or comprehended. Again, that Great Intent is neither something to be grasped nor something to be comprehended. It is not that the Noble Truths and training-and-enlightenment do not exist: it is that they are not something to be grasped or comprehended. And it is not that the Noble Truths and training-and-enlightenment exist only for a while, it is just that they are not something to be grasped or comprehended.

Dōgo asked, "As you have gone above and beyond, is there any other way you have of putting It?" That is, if there is another way the Master has of putting It, it will be a manifestation of the Master's having gone above and beyond, for 'another way of putting It' is synonymous with skillful means, and 'skillful means' is synonymous with all the Buddhas and all the Ancestors. Although the Master stated it in the way that he did, a further way may indeed exist. Even though a further way may exist, it is not something that will exclude 'a further way does not exist', for that could also be a Master's assertion.

"The vast expanse of space does not hinder the white clouds as they float by" were Sekitō's very words. Moreover, his use of the words 'vast expanse of space' is not something that puts a limit on the vast expanse of space. Although his

saying 'the vast expanse of space' does not hinder the vast expanse of space from floating by, his 'white clouds', by its very nature, also does not limit the white clouds. The white clouds' floating by is unhindered, and the floating by of white clouds does not hinder the vast expanse of space from floating by. Not to be limited by others is also not to be limited by oneself. It is not the case that in order for a face-to-face meeting to take place, there be no limits except the one that each person does not hinder the other. Because of this, there are no limits between Master and disciple. This expresses the ultimate reality and the outer form of Sekitō's statement, "The vast expanse of space does not hinder the white clouds as they float by." At that very moment, Sekitō raised the eyebrows of the one who was exploring the Great Intent through his training, and the trainee caught a glimpse of the Buddha coming to meet him and encountered the Ancestor coming to meet him: he met himself coming and met the other coming. This has been considered the principle of 'asking once and being answered ten times'. As to the 'asking once and being answered ten times' of which I am now speaking, the one who asks once must be 'such a person' and the one who gives ten replies must also be 'such a person'.

❀

Ōbaku once said:

> Well now, persons who have left home life behind to become monks need to realize that there is an aspect of the Matter that has come down to them from the past. For example, it is like Great Master Gozu Hōyū, who realized the Truth while training under the Fourth Chinese Ancestor Daii Dōshin. Even though Gozu's voicing of the Dharma had breadth and depth, he still never comprehended the key point of what was above and beyond Buddhahood.[13] When you have the eyes and the brains for this, you will be able to distinguish between false and true religious groups.

The Matter that has come down from the past, which Ōbaku alluded to in this way, is the Matter that has been genuinely Transmitted down to us by Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor. We call that Matter the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, which is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. Even though we say that It exists within us, we need to recognize It. And even though

13. That is, he never understood that one goes on, always <u>becoming</u> Buddha, even after an initial realization of the Truth.

we say that It exists within us, It is still beyond the intellect's ability to grasp. Without the genuine Transmission of Buddha after Buddha, one cannot encounter It even in one's dreams. Ōbaku was a Dharma child of Hyakujō and even surpassed Hyakujō. And, as a Dharma grandchild of Baso, he even surpassed Baso. Generally speaking, among the Ancestors of those three or four generations, none could stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Ōbaku. It is Ōbaku alone who made it clear that Gozu lacked both horns.[14] Other Buddhas and Ancestors have never recognized this.

Meditation Master Hōyū of Mount Gozu was a venerable monk of high standing who trained under the Fourth Chinese Ancestor. His teaching was broad and deep. Truly, when we compare him with academic teachers of Scriptures and scholarly commentators, among those who came to eastern lands from the West he was neither inadequate nor lacking. Yet even so, sad to say, he had not recognized the key point of what lay above and beyond Buddhahood and was therefore unable to state what the key point of being above and beyond Buddhahood was about. Because he did not know what this key point was, how could he possibly distinguish between the false and the true? He was simply a person who had merely studied words. To know the key point of what lies above and beyond Buddhahood, to train and practice with this key point, and to awaken to this key point are unreachable for ordinary, run-of-the-mill people. Yet wherever there is a genuine effort to train, It will manifest without fail.

What is called 'the experience of going above and beyond Buddhahood' is synonymous with arriving at Buddhahood, and then going on above and beyond until one once again meets Buddha. It is the same as sentient beings' meeting Buddha. Since this is so, then if one's encountering Buddha is simply on a par with a sentient being's encountering 'a Buddha', then this will not be 'meeting Buddha'.[15] If one's encountering Buddha is just like a sentient being's encountering 'a Buddha', that person's meeting Buddha will be illusory. How much less could it be the experience of going above and beyond Buddhahood! You need to know that the experience that is above and beyond, of which Ōbaku speaks, is above and beyond what is envisioned by those folks nowadays with limited insight. Simply, there have been those whose expressions of the Dharma

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14. There is a play on words here that is lost in translation. The name Gozu means 'bull's head'. To say that he lacked both horns alludes to his not yet having experienced full spiritual maturity.

15. 'Meeting Buddha' is the topic of Discourse 59: On Encountering Buddha *(Kembutsu)*. There, as here, Dōgen distinguishes between our ability to see Buddha Nature in someone else and our ability to recognize our own Buddha Nature.

were below those of Gozu and there have been those whose expressions of the Dharma were equal with those of Gozu, and even so, they may well have been the younger and older Dharma brothers of Gozu. How could they possibly know the key point of what is above and beyond Buddhahood? Others, such as those 'thrice wise and ten times saintly',* do not know the key point that lies above and beyond Buddhahood. How much less could they open or close the key point of what lies above and beyond! This point is the very eyes for your exploring the Matter through your training with your Master. If you know what the key point of going above and beyond Buddhahood is, you will be a person who has gone above and beyond Buddhahood, for you will have realized what lies above and beyond Buddhahood.

Given to the assembly at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the twenty-third day of the third lunar month of the Ninji era (April 24, 1242).

Copied by me, based on an unrevised manuscript written in the grass style, at Eihei-ji Temple on a day during the summer retreat in the first year of the Shōgen era (1259).

Ejō

28

On That Which Comes Like This

(Immo)

Translator's Introduction: *Immo* is a word that comes from colloquial Sung dynasty Chinese. English equivalents would include 'this', 'that', 'thus', 'in this way or manner', 'like this', and 'in such a way as this'. It was used by the Chinese Zen Masters to designate 'That Which Is', the Ultimate Reality which goes beyond any words we can employ to describe It. The word was also used when describing someone who knows through direct experience what the term 'That Which Is' is pointing to, namely, 'such a person' or 'such a one'.

Dōyō of Mount Ungo was a Dharma heir of Tōzan. He was a Dharma descendant of the thirty-ninth generation from Shakyamuni Buddha, and he is the rightful ancestral heir of Tōzan's tradition. One day, Dōyō gave Teaching to his assembly, saying: "If you wish to experience That Which Is, you need to be 'such a person'.* If you are already 'such a person', why be worried about experiencing That Which Is?" In other words, any who wish to realize the Great Matter* of That Which Is must themselves be 'such a person'. Since they are already 'such a person', why would they be worried about experiencing That Which Is? The point of this is that the supreme enlightenment we are heading for is what, for the present, I am calling *immo*. This condition of supreme enlightenment is such that even the whole universe in all the ten quarters is but a trifling bit of supreme enlightenment, and that enlightenment is far beyond the whole universe. Even we are all merely accessories within this whole universe in all the ten quarters. And by what means are we to know that That Which Is exists? In a word, we know that it is so because both our body and mind together make their appearance within the whole universe, yet neither is ours to possess.

This body is already not 'me' and each life flows on through time; it is beyond our ability to halt it for even a moment. Where has the ruddy face of our youth gone? Were we to seek it out, it has left not a trace. When we look deeply, we see that the myriad things of the past will not come back again. A heart that is sincere, likewise, does not remain fixed, but comes and goes, moment by moment. We may say that there is truth in this sincere heart, but it is not something that

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* See *Glossary.*

lingers behind within the vicinity of a personal self. Even so, there is something that unboundedly gives rise to the intention to realize enlightenment. After this intention has arisen, we abandon those things that we used to play around with, desiring to hear what we have not yet heard and seeking to realize what we have not yet realized—and this is not solely something of our own doing. Keep in mind that, because you are 'such a person', this is so. How do we know that we are 'such a person'? Just by our wishing to gain the experiencing of That Which Is do we know that we are 'such a person'. You already have the countenance of 'such a person', so you must not worry yourself now over experiencing That Which Is. Even though you may be worried, this is also an experiencing of That Which Is, and It is beyond being something to worry about. Further, you should not be surprised that the experience of That Which Is is present in such a state. Even though you are in such a state of surprise and doubt, this too is That Which Is. And That Which Is is also described as being beyond surprise. This state cannot be measured by the reckoning of a Buddha, or by the reckoning of the mind, or by the reckoning of the Dharma Realm, or by the reckoning of the whole universe. It will simply be "Since you are already 'such a person', why are you worried about experiencing That Which Is?"

So, the True Nature of sound, color, and form is That Which Is, the True Nature of body and mind is That Which Is, and the True Nature of Buddhas is That Which Is. For example, we understand that when we fall, we rely on the ground being there, as it is, existing just as it is, and that when we get up, we rely on the ground being there, existing just as it is, so we should not be surprised that our falling down has also relied on the ground being there.[1]

There is a Teaching that has been voiced from ancient times, one that has been voiced in India and from the heavens above. It says in effect, "If, because of the ground, you fall down, you will get up, also because of the ground: should you try to get up independent of the ground, ultimately, that is impossible." In other words, those who fall down on the ground will invariably get up on the ground. Were they to attempt to get up apart from the ground, they will not succeed.

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1. In this section of the discourse, references to 'the ground' have more than one meaning. When we fall (that is, act contrary to a Precept), we rely on 'hitting the ground' somewhere along the line, and we depend on this 'grounding' to help us get up and go on, trying to keep to the Precepts. At the same time, what we are ultimately relying on is That Which is Our Spiritual Ground. Further on in the discourse, Dōgen will use the phrase 'by relying on the ground' in the sense of relying on what is concrete in our life, which cannot be relied on except in relation to That Which Is Like Empty Space. When we fall while relying on this Empty Space, we can arise by admitting to the things that we have done.

Following through on what has just been described, we take it as an expression of the beauty of a great awakening and have made it into a path for freeing ourselves from body and mind. Therefore, should someone ask us what the principle underlying 'realizing the Way of all Buddhas' is, we would say that it is like someone who has fallen to the ground relying on the Ground for arising. When you explore this through your training with a Master, you need to penetrate into and rise above the past, the future, and this very moment of the present. Whether we are really awake or unawakened, whether we return to our delusions or lose our delusions, whether we are hindered by 'awakening' or hindered by delusion—all of these illustrate the principle of someone who has fallen on the ground relying on the Ground to get up. This is an expression of the Way of those in the heavens above and the earth below: it is an expression of the Way in both India and the lands to the east. It is an expression of the Way from the past to the present and into the future: it is an expression of the Way of Old Buddhas and of New Buddhas. And further, this expression of the Way is never incomplete in its expression, nor does its Truth ever wane.

Be that as it may, to understand the expression only in this way and to fail to understand it in any other way is as if one had not explored this statement thoroughly with one's Master. Even though the expression of an Old Buddha has been passed on to us in such a manner, yet, when as an Old Buddha ourselves, we hear the expression of an Old Buddha, we will be hearing That which transcends Buddhahood.

Although it was not stated in India or in lofty circles, there is another principle being asserted here. Namely, if someone who has fallen on the ground should seek to arise by relying on the ground, though he spends immeasurable eons at the task, he will never be able to get up. He <u>can</u> get up by means of the one single, absolute Path. That is, someone who has fallen on the ground arises by relying on Empty Space, and someone who has fallen in empty space can arise by relying on the Ground. If there were no 'That Which Is', one could not rise. All the Buddhas and all the Ancestors were no different from this.

Were someone to ask such a question as, "How far apart are Empty Space and the Ground?" you should reply, "Empty Space and the Ground are a hundred and eight thousand miles apart. If you should fall upon the ground, by all means get up by relying on Empty Space, for ultimately there is no such principle as arising apart from Empty Space. If you should fall while relying upon empty space, you will unquestionably arise by relying on the Ground, for ultimately there is no such principle as arising apart from the Ground." If someone has never asserted the

Matter like this, that person has never known or seen the dimensions of Ground and Empty Space.

> Our Seventeenth Ancestral Master, the Venerable Sōgyanandai, declared Kayashata to be his Dharma heir. One time, upon hearing a temple bell that was hanging in a hall being rung by the wind, he asked Kayashata, "Is it the wind we hear or is it the bell we hear?"
>
> Kayashata replied, "It is beyond the sounding of the wind and beyond the sounding of the bell: it is the sounding of my own Mind."
>
> The Venerable Sōgyanandai asked, "And, say, just what <u>is</u> your own Mind?"
>
> Kayashata replied, "It is equivalent to saying that everything is altogether tranquil in its stillness."
>
> The Venerable Sōgyanandai said, "Well done! Excellently done! Who other than you, my disciple, could succeed to our Way!" Thereupon, he Transmitted to Kayashata the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching.

Here, in a state beyond the sounding of the wind, we learn what the sound of our Mind is. When we are beyond what the sounding of the bell is, we learn what the sound of our Mind is. Even though the sound of our Mind is like this, everything is, nonetheless, altogether tranquil in its stillness.

This story was Transmitted from India to the eastern lands, and from ancient times to the present day. It has been considered a standard for learning the Way, but many have misunderstood it, saying, "Kayashata's assertion that it is neither the sounding of the wind nor the sounding of the bell but the sounding of our mind means that, at the very moment of when a sound occurs, there is an arising of discriminative thought, and this arising of discriminative thought is what we call 'mind'. If this mental awareness did not exist, how could we possibly be conscious of a ringing sound? Since hearing results from this awareness, we can certainly call it the foundation of hearing, which is why he said that it is the sounding of his mind." This is a false understanding. Such people say things like this because they lack the assistance of a genuine teacher. For instance, it is comparable to the interpretations of scholars who write commentaries on topics like subjectivism and proximate conceptualization. Commentaries like these are not profound explorations of the words of a Buddha.

On the other hand, those who have explored the Matter with a genuine heir of the Buddha's Way speak of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching

on supreme enlightenment in terms of 'stillness' and 'not acting willfully' and 'meditative states' and 'invocations'. The underlying principle is, if one thought or thing is truly still, all the myriad thoughts and things are also still along with it. If the wind's blowing is still, then the bell's ringing will be still: hence, Kayashata spoke of everything being altogether tranquil in its stillness. He was saying that the sounding of Mind is beyond the sounds of the wind, and the sounding of Mind is beyond the sounds of the bell, and the sounding of Mind is beyond the sounds of the mind. Having diligently explored his realization of what is intimately connected with That Which Is, he was able to simply state it, and he could also have said that it is the sound of wind, the sound of bell, the sound of blowing, and the sound of sounding. It is not a matter of "Why be worried about experiencing That Which Is?" but rather of "Why get stuck on experiencing That Which Is?"

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Before our Thirty-third Ancestor, Meditation Master Daikan Enō, had shaved his head, he was residing at Hosshō-ji Temple in Kuangchou Province, when he overheard two monks arguing. One was asserting that the banner was moving. The other was asserting that the wind was moving. The argument went on like this, back and forth without letup, until the Sixth Ancestor said, "It is not the wind that is moving, nor the banner that is moving: it is your minds, dear sirs, which are moving."[2] Upon hearing this, the two monks forthwith accepted what he said.

These two monks were from India. What the Sixth Ancestor was asserting by speaking these words for their sake was that the wind, the banner, and the movement all exist within Mind. Though people today may hear the Sixth Ancestor's words, they do not understand the Sixth Ancestor's meaning. How much less can they put into words what the Sixth Ancestor is expressing! Why do I say this? Because hearing the words "You, dear sirs, are Mind moving," people today take it as literally asserting, "It is your minds, dear sirs, which are moving," and thus fail to encounter the Sixth Ancestor, or comprehend the Sixth Ancestor, or be a Dharma offspring of the Sixth Ancestor. Now, as descendants of the Sixth Ancestor, we can also say what the Sixth Ancestor said, and we can say it because we have obtained the Body, Hair, and Skin of the Sixth Ancestor. And we can state it this way, "Of course, your mind may move, but what is more, you yourselves,

2. The Sixth Ancestor's remark is ambiguous. Later in the text, Dōgen will interpret it as, "The matter is beyond the wind moving and beyond the banner moving: you are the Mind moving."

dear sirs, Move." Why do we say it in this way? Because That which is moving is 'Moving', and because 'you, dear sirs,' means you, dear sirs. And we have put it this way because all of you are already 'such a one'.

In his former days, the Sixth Ancestor sold firewood in Hsinchou Province. He was thoroughly familiar with the mountains and the water, and, having put forth his efforts beneath the pine trees, he severed the roots. But how could he have known of the ancient Teachings that illumine the Mind when someone is seated at ease by the Bright Window, and from whom could he have learned about cleansing and removing stains?[3] He was in the marketplace when he heard someone reciting a Scripture. It was not something that he himself had expected, nor was it something that someone else had encouraged him to do. While still a child, he was bereft of his father, and, when he was grown, he took care of his mother. Little did he know that concealed beneath those clothes of his was a Jewel that would light up the heavens and the earth. Having suddenly been illumined by hearing the Scripture, he departed from his elderly mother and went searching for a good spiritual friend—all of which is uncommon behavior among human beings, for who can treat lightly the bonds of affection for one's parents? But in attaching greater weight to the Dharma, he treated as lighter his debt of filial gratitude and renounced his worldly obligations. This is the principle expressed by the verse:

When those who have spiritual wisdom hear It voiced,
They are able to trust and understand It at once.

What we call 'spiritual wisdom' cannot be learned from someone else, nor is it something that we ourselves give rise to. Since wisdom can Transmit wisdom, wisdom will seek out wisdom. The five hundred bats naturally had wisdom within themselves; moreover, they clung to neither their body nor their mind.[4] And when

3. Although this sentence and the previous one have their literal meanings, there is also the metaphorical meaning of his having learned the Dharma as It is expressed by things in nature, and, through his devotion to his physical labor, he also learned how to sever the roots of his delusions. However, he was poor and illiterate, so he could not study Scriptures at his leisure, and he did not know of anyone under whose guidance he could do the spiritual practice of cleansing his karma.

4. An allusion to a story of five hundred bats who were living in a tree. A traveler, passing by, stopped to build a fire to keep warm while he read a Scripture aloud. When the fire set the tree ablaze, the bats stayed where they were, preferring to be burned alive rather than miss hearing a single word of Scripture, and this they could do because they were not attached to body or mind.

the ten thousand swimming fish heard the Dharma, they were immediately able to understand It, not because of any conditions or causes, but simply because they had wisdom ever present within themselves.[5] It is not something that comes to us, nor is it something that enters us. For instance, it is like the Lord of the East meeting the spring.[6] Wisdom is beyond discriminative thought and beyond an absence of discriminative thinking, as well as beyond intentions and beyond an absence of intentions. Even less would it be related to something's being large or small, and even less still could we discuss it in terms of delusion and enlightenment! The point is that the Sixth Ancestor had no clue as to what the Buddha's Dharma was, never having heard It before, and therefore he was neither attached to It nor desirous of It. But once he heard the Dharma, he held his filial bonds to be less binding and put his false sense of self out of his mind. This happened because the body and mind of someone who has wisdom is already something that does not belong to any personal self. This is what is called 'being able to immediately trust and understand It'.

We do not know how many rounds of birth and death we have already spent returning again and again to various useless delusions, even while possessing this wisdom. It is like rocks covering up a jewel: the jewel is unaware that it is covered up by rocks and the rocks are unaware that they are covering up a jewel. When human beings recognize this jewel, they seize upon it. This is not something that the jewel expectantly awaits nor is it something that the rocks have been waiting for, and it does not depend on a spiritual awakening on the part of the rocks nor is it something that the jewel thinks about. That is to say, even though a human being and wisdom are unaware of each other, the Way is invariably overheard by the person's wisdom.

There is a saying in the *Lotus Scripture*:

> *Those in whom wisdom is absent doubt that it exists*
> *And, by acting thus, they miss their chances for ever so long.*

Wisdom is not necessarily 'something that is present' and it is not necessarily 'something that is absent', but rather, at a certain moment, there is the presence of the pine trees of spring and the chrysanthemums of autumn are not to be found. At

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5. An allusion to ten thousand fish who were dying because the water in which they lived began to dry up. Upon hearing someone reading a Scripture aloud, they escaped from their suffering and were reborn as celestial beings in the Tushita Heaven.

6. The Lord of the East is the spirit of springtime who shows up the moment that spring arrives.

the time of this absence of wisdom, the whole of the highest supreme enlightenment becomes something doubtful, and every thought and thing also becomes doubtful. At this time, one misses one's chances for ever so long by acting from this doubt. Words that should be heard and Dharma that should be awakened to both become something doubtful. In the whole universe—which we do not possess—there is nowhere that is hidden to us, for the whole universe is a single iron rod thousands of miles long, and no one possesses it. Even though twigs bud in accord with this, as the Lotus Scripture says:

> *Within the Buddha lands in the ten quarters,*
> *There is only the Teaching of the One Vehicle.*

And even though leaves fall in accord with this, as the Lotus Scripture also says:

> *The Dharma abides in Its place in the Dharma,*
> *And the forms of the world are ever recurring.*

Because this is already the way things are, wisdom's being present and wisdom's not being present is what the face of the sun is to the face of the moon.[7]

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Because the Sixth Ancestor was 'such a person', he could clearly discern the Truth. Ultimately, he paid a visit to Mount Ōbai, prostrating himself before Meditation Master Daiman Kōnin, who allowed him to lodge in the servants' hall. Day and night, he pounded rice.

> A bare eight months had passed when, late in the night, Kōnin himself came unseen to the rice-pounding shed and asked the Sixth Ancestor, "Is the rice white yet?"
>
> The Sixth Ancestor said, "It is white, but it has not yet been winnowed."
>
> Kōnin struck the mortar three times, whereupon the Sixth Ancestor tossed the rice three times in the winnowing-basket.

It is said that at this moment Master and disciple became mutually in accord with the Truth. They may not have known it themselves, and it is something others may not understand, but the Transmission of the Dharma and the Transmission of the Robe must certainly have occurred at that very moment.

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7. That is, wisdom is inherent in the Cosmic Buddha (the sun) and is reflected in our Buddha Nature (the moon).

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> Sekitō Kisen of Mount Nangaku was once asked by his disciple Yakusan, "I have a rough understanding of the Three Vehicles* and the twelve divisions of the Scriptures, but I have heard that here in the south, there is a direct pointing to the human heart whereby one sees his True Nature and becomes Buddha. With deepest respect, I pray that you, Venerable Monk, out of compassion, will instruct me."

This was Yakusan's request. Yakusan, since early on, had been a lecturer and had thoroughly penetrated the meaning of the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptures. So it seems that he was not in the dark about the Buddha Dharma. In those former times, separate traditions had not yet arisen, so just clarifying the meaning of the Three Vehicles and the twelve divisions of the Scriptures was considered the customary way to study what the Scriptures taught. Nowadays there are many who, from thickheadedness, have set up their own standards with which to evaluate the Buddha Dharma, but this is not customary in the Buddha's Way.

> The Great Master said, "Being 'such a person' is unattainable, not being 'such a person' is unattainable, and both being 'such a person' and not being 'such a person' are together unattainable.[8] How about you? What do you think?"

This is what the Great Master said for the benefit of Yakusan. Truly, because being 'such a person' and not being 'such a person' are altogether unattainable, being 'such a person' is unattainable and not being 'such a person' is unattainable. Being 'such a person' is what we mean by *immo*. It is not a matter of the usefulness of words having limits or not having limits. You need to explore through your training that being 'such a person' is unattainable and that what is unattainable is being 'such a person'. It is not that being 'such a person' and being unattainable are of concern only to the evaluations of a Buddha. To understand them intellectually is unattainable; to understand them through direct experience is unattainable.

8. That is, seeing what one's True Nature is and thereby becoming Buddha is not something to be obtained, since enlightenment already is.

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Meditation Master Daikan Enō of Mount Sōkei once gave instruction to Nangaku saying, "What has come about like this?"[9] These words show that Nangaku's being 'such a person' is beyond doubt because he is beyond intellectual understanding. And because "What has come about like this" is the What, you should thoroughly explore through your training that all the myriad things that comprise the universe are, beyond any doubt, the What. And you should thoroughly explore through your training that each and every single thing is, beyond any doubt, the What. The What is not subject to doubt, for It is That Which Comes Like This.

Given to the assembly at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the twenty-sixth day of the third lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (April 27, 1242).

Copied by me in the quarters of the Abbot's assistant on the fourth day of the fourth month in the first year of the Kangen era (April 24, 1243).

Ejō

9. There is a play on words in this remark. Though it appears to be a question, it is actually a direct statement meaning, as Dōgen will indicate, "The What has come about like this."

29

On Ceaseless Practice

(Gyōji)

Translator's Introduction: *Gyōji* is Dōgen's longest discourse in the *Shōbōgenzō*. It was apparently given to his disciples in written form, and, because of its length, it was bound in two fascicles, identified as the upper part and the lower part. Since the lower part is simply a continuation of the upper, the two have not been treated here as separate works. In the original text, an alternate name was given at the end of the lower part: The Ceaseless Practice of the Buddhas and Ancestors (*Busso Gyōji*).

Gyōji can be literally rendered as 'doing the practice and keeping to it', hence, 'ceaseless practice'. It can also be understood as a truncated form of *shugyō jikai*, 'doing one's training and practice while keeping to the Precepts'. Further, as Dōgen makes clear through the many stories of Indian and Chinese Masters that he recounts, 'practice' does not refer to some fixed agenda but differs in form with each Master, and yet is recognizable as that individual's ceaseless practice.

The Great Way of Buddhas and Ancestors invariably involves unsurpassed ceaseless practice. This practice rolls on in a cyclic manner without interruption. Not a moment's gap has occurred in Their giving rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood, in Their doing the training and practice, in Their experiencing enlightenment, and in Their realizing nirvana, for the Great Way of ceaseless practice rolls on just like this. As a result, the practice is not done by forcing oneself to do it and it is not done by being forced to do it by someone else: it is a ceaseless practice that is never tainted by forcing. The merits from this ceaseless practice sustain us and sustain others.

The underlying principle of this practice is that the whole universe in all ten directions receives the merit of our ceaseless practice. Though others may not recognize it, though we may not recognize it ourselves, still, it is so. As a result, owing to the ceaseless practice of all the Buddhas and Ancestors, our own ceaseless practice has clearly manifested. And, owing to our ceaseless practice, the ceaseless practice of all the Buddhas clearly manifests, and the Great Way of the Buddhas pervades everywhere. And, owing to our ceaseless practice, the Buddha's Way rolls perpetually onward. Accordingly, Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor have dwelt within Buddha, have acted from the Heart of Buddha,

and have fully manifested Buddha, and They have done so without a single moment's interruption.

Due to this ceaseless practice, there is the sun, the moon, and the stars. Due to ceaseless practice, there is the great earth and the vast expanse of space. Due to ceaseless practice, there is body and mind, along with the internal effects of our past karma* and the external conditions of our surroundings. Due to ceaseless practice, there are the four great elements* and the five skandhas.* Even though ceaseless practice is not something that worldly folk desire, it will be what all human beings truly come back to. Due to the ceaseless practice of all Buddhas of past, present, and future, all Buddhas manifest ceaseless practice in the past, present, and future. And there are also times when the merit from that ceaseless practice no longer lies hidden, and, as a result, the intention to realize Buddhahood arises, along with training and practice. And there are times when that merit does not show itself, and, as a result, it is not encountered or perceived. You need to explore through your training that even though it may not show itself, it does not lie hidden, because it is not tainted with appearing and disappearing or with existing and dying away. Though it may be concealed from us at the present moment, the ceaseless practice that has brought us into existence is present in every single thought and thing, all of which arise due to coexisting conditions, and we just do not realize that we are actually doing ceaseless practice.

Moreover, if we wish to grasp what ceaseless practice is, we should not make a special case out of every new thing that comes along. This is because, from the perspective of Dependent Origination, there is simply ceaseless practice, and ceaseless practice does not come about as a result of depending upon anything. You need to explore this point with diligence and in detail. The ceaseless practice that makes ceaseless practice manifest is nothing other than our own ceaseless practice in the here and now. Ceaseless practice is not present here and now because it is something that we innately have within ourselves; it is not something that already dwells within us.[1] Its presence in the here and now is beyond the comings and goings of a 'self' and beyond the departings and emergings of a 'self'. The phrase 'here and now' does not refer to something that existed prior to ceaseless practice: 'the here and now' refers to ceaseless practice fully manifesting itself in the present.

Accordingly, the ceaseless practice of one day is the seed of all Buddhas: it is the ceaseless practice of all Buddhas. By means of it, all Buddhas fully manifest

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* See *Glossary*.

1. That is, it does not refer to some kind of soul or permanent self.

Themselves. So, to not do ceaseless practice is to loathe all Buddhas, and to fail to make alms offerings to all Buddhas is to loathe ceaseless practice, and to fail to live and die together with all Buddhas is to fail both to learn from Them and to explore the Matter* with Them. To see a flower opening or a leaf falling in the here and now is to fully see what ceaseless practice is. There is no polishing of the Mirror or smashing of the Mirror that is not ceaseless practice.[2] Thus, if anyone tried to set aside ceaseless practice—ignoring it in an attempt to conceal their wicked intention to escape from ceaseless practice—this too would be ceaseless practice. Accordingly, some who are inclined towards ceaseless practice may merely resemble someone who has a genuine intention to do ceaseless practice, still, such persons would be like the perplexed son who threw away the treasures and riches of the native land of his true father and wandered off into foreign lands.[3] Even though, during the time of his wandering about aimlessly, the winds and waters did not cause him to lose life or limb, nevertheless he should not have thrown away his true father's treasure, for that is to mistakenly lose the Dharma Treasure of his True Father. This is why ceaseless practice is Dharma that is not to be neglected even for a moment.

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Our benevolent spiritual father, Great Master Shakyamuni Buddha, had been observing ceaseless practice deep in the mountains from the nineteenth year of His life until His thirtieth year, when there arose the ceaseless practice by which He realized the Way simultaneously with the great earth and its sentient beings. Up through the eightieth year of His life, He was still doing ceaseless practice in the mountains, and in the forests, and in the monasteries. He did not return to His father's royal palace or assume governance over the prosperity of the nation. For clothing, He kept to the large sanghati robe—the kind that monks still wear—and He did not exchange it for another type of robe for the rest of His life. He did not exchange His alms bowl for another one during His lifetime, and He never stayed alone, not even once in a day. He did not reject so much as a single worthless alms offering from either ordinary folk or those in lofty positions, and He bore with patience the insults of non-Buddhists. In sum, His whole life was ceaseless

2. Dōgen explores these allusions to the Mirror thoroughly in his Discourse 19: On the Ancient Mirror *(Kokyō)*.

3. An allusion to a parable in the *Lotus Scripture*, found in the fourth chapter entitled "Belief and Understanding", which describes how we spend so much of our lives running away from the Buddha.

practice. It can never be said that the Buddha's examples of washing His robe and accepting alms for His food were not ceaseless practice.

❀

The Eighth Indian Ancestor, the Venerable Makakashō, was the Venerable Shakyamuni's Dharma heir.[4] Throughout his life he completely devoted himself to the ceaseless practice of the twelve zudas.[5] The twelve zudas are as follows:

> (1) Not to accept personal invitations from people, but to go on alms round for one's food each day. Also, not to accept money with which to purchase even part of a monk's meal.
>
> (2) To lodge overnight on a mountain and not to stay in the dwelling of ordinary folk, in a highly populated district, or in some town or village.[6]
>
> (3) Not to beg people for clothing. Also, not to accept any clothing that is offered by people, but simply to take the clothing of the dead that has been discarded at gravesides.
>
> (4) To lodge under a tree within some field, whether cultivated or not.
>
> (5) To eat one meal per day. This is sometimes called *sunka sunnai*.[7]
>
> (6) Not to lie down, day or night, but simply to sleep while sitting up or to do walking meditation when drowsy. This is sometimes called *sunnai sashakyō*.[8]

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4. Makakashō is considered the Eighth Indian Ancestor when we begin from the first of the Seven Buddhas, of whom Shakyamuni Buddha was the seventh.

5. A zuda (Skt. *dhūta*) is an austere practice that, in later Mahayana Buddhism, became associated with the Lesser Course. Dōgen's subsequent listing of the twelve zudas is apparently based on a Chinese text called *The Great Scripture on the Three Thousand Forms of Everyday Behavior for Monks*.

6. 'On a mountain' here most likely refers to staying in a monastery, temple, or hermitage.

7. *Sunka sunnai* is the Japanese pronunciation of a corrupt Chinese transliteration of the Pali word *ekāsanika*, which means 'one meal a day'.

8. As in the preceding footnote, *sunnai sashakyō* is a corruption of the Pali *nesajjika*, meaning 'not lying down day or night'.

(7) To possess only three robes and never to have an extra robe. Also, not to sleep wrapped in a blanket.

(8) To reside in cemeteries and not to take up permanent residence in Buddhist temples or among people. To do seated meditation and seek the Way while looking directly at the skulls and bones of the dead.

(9) To desire merely to live by oneself, without desiring to meet other people or to sleep amidst a group of people.

(10) To eat the raw fruits of trees and plants first, and then to eat one's cooked food. After having finished eating one's cooked food, to not then eat the raw fruits of trees and plants.

(11) To be content to sleep out in the open, without seeking shelter under some tree.

(12) Not to eat meat. Also, not to eat processed milk products or apply hemp oil to one's body.

These are the twelve zudas. The Venerable Makakashō did not regress or turn away from these throughout his whole lifetime. Even though the Tathagata's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching was directly Transmitted to him, he did not step back from practicing these zudas.

The Buddha once said to him, "You are already one who is old in years, so you should eat what the other monks eat."

The Venerable Makakashō replied, "If I had not met the Tathagata in this lifetime, I would have been a pratyekabuddha.* I would have resided all my life in mountains and forests. Fortunately, I encountered the Tathagata in this lifetime and have been blessed with the beneficence of the Dharma. Even so, in the end, I will not eat as the other monks in the community eat."

The Tathagata praised him for that.

On another occasion, because Makakashō had been ceaselessly practicing these zudas, his body had grown emaciated. When the assembly of monks saw him, they belittled him. Thereupon, the Tathagata cordially summoned Makakashō and made room for him on half His seat. The Venerable Makakashō sat down on the Tathagata's seat. You need to keep in mind that Makakashō was a senior monk of long standing in the Buddha's assembly. We cannot fully enumerate the ways in which he ceaselessly practiced for his whole life.

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The Tenth Indian Ancestor, the Venerable Barishiba, once vowed that for the rest of his life he would not let his ribs touch his mat.[9] Even though he was eighty-six years old, he did his utmost in practicing the Way and was soon given the one-to-one Transmission of the Great Dharma. Because he did not let his days and nights idly slip by, he was given the one-to-one Transmission of the True Eye of Enlightenment after barely three years of effort. The Venerable One had been in his mother's womb for sixty years, and when he was born, his hair was already white. Because he kept to his vow not to lie down like a corpse, he was called 'The One of Venerable Ribs'. In the dark, he would release a radiance from his hands by means of which he was able to read the Scriptures and thereby procure the Dharma. This was a strange and wondrous trait that he was born with.

> The One of Venerable Ribs was almost eighty years old when he renounced home life and dyed his robes.
>
> A young man who lived in the area asked him, "You foolish, decrepit old man, how can you be so dim-witted? Besides, those who leave home life to become monks have two kinds of undertakings: first, they learn how to meditate; second, they chant the Scriptures. You are now feeble and senile, so there is no way for you to progress by doing either. To put it simply, you will carelessly muddy up the waters and will fill your stomach with alms offerings to no purpose."
>
> The One of Venerable Ribs, upon hearing these rebukes and snide remarks, then thanked the man and made a vow, saying, "I will not let my ribs touch my mat until I have thoroughly mastered the fundamental meaning of the *Tripitaka*,* cut off all craving for anything within the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form, obtained the six marvelous spiritual abilities, and equipped myself with the eight kinds of detachment from delusion."

From that time on, there was not even one day that he did not practice walking and seated meditation, as well as practicing mindful meditation while standing still. During the day, he investigated and learned the Scriptures and Their underlying

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9 It is unclear whether Barishiba meant what he said figuratively, as we might speak of 'not lying down on the job', or literally. Over the millennia, some monks have attempted to follow Barishiba's practice literally and have even devised ways to bind themselves whilst in full lotus position so that they would not fall into a prone position if they should fall asleep.

principles; at night, he calmed his discriminatory thinking and cooled down his active mind. Continuing on in this way for three years, he explored and thoroughly mastered the *Tripitaka*, cut off his craving for the three worlds, and attained the wise discernment which arises from the three forms of clarity.[10] People at that time, out of deep respect, gave him the name of the One of Venerable Ribs.

The One of Venerable Ribs left the womb after having first spent sixty years there. Surely he must have been doing his best even whilst in the womb. After he left the womb, it was almost eighty years before he sought to leave home life and explore the Way. This was a hundred and forty years after he was conceived! Truly, he was an extraordinary person, and even so, he was a decrepit old man who must have been more decrepit and more old than anyone else. He had already attained old age whilst still in the womb, and he was advanced in years since having left the womb. Even so, he paid no heed to the slanderous and snide remarks made by people of his time and single-mindedly kept to his vow, never turning away from it. Who could possibly think it would be an easy task to try to emulate his spiritual wisdom?

Do not regret your reaching old age. It is difficult to know what this thing called life really is. Is a person 'really living' or 'not really living'? Is a person 'old' or 'not old'? The four perspectives are completely different; all the various types of perspectives are different as well.[11] Just concentrate on your intention and make your utmost effort to pursue the Way. In your pursuit of the Way, train as if you were facing a life-and-death situation: it is not simply your pursuit of the Way within life-and-death. People today have become so foolish as to set aside their pursuit of the Way upon reaching the age of fifty or sixty, or upon reaching seventy or eighty. Although we are naturally aware of how long we have lived, this is simply the human mind energetically engaged in discriminating and has nothing to do with studying the Way. Do not concern yourself with being in the prime of life or having reached old age. Just be single-minded in exploring the Way thoroughly and diligently, for then you will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the One of Venerable Ribs.

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10. The three forms of clarity are the ability to see one's own past lives and those of others, the ability to see the karmic consequences that will follow from one's own actions as well as those of others, and the ability to recognize the sufferings of oneself and others within their present life and to know how to convert the passions that give rise to those sufferings.

11. 'The four perspectives' refers to a Buddhist metaphor which describes the way that different beings interpret what they see. In the metaphor, water is described from the perspective of four different beings: humans see it as ordinary water, hungry ghosts as bloody pus, fish as a dwelling place, and celestial beings as liquid lapis lazuli.

Do not always be lamenting the fact that you will end up as a pile of dirt in a graveyard. Do not spend your time worrying about it. If you do not single-mindedly devote yourself to reaching the Other Shore, who will rescue you? When people are aimlessly wandering about in the wilderness like skeletons without a Master, they need to cultivate right perception so that they may fashion an eye for themselves.[12]

The Sixth Chinese Ancestor was a woodcutter in the district of Hsinning. He could hardly have been called an intellectual. While just an infant, he lost his father, and he grew up under the care of his aged mother. He worked as a woodcutter in order to support her. Whilst standing at a crossroads one day, he overheard one line of a Scripture being recited, and immediately parted from his mother in order to seek the Great Dharma. He was a great vessel for the Truth, of a caliber rarely met in any generation. His pursuit of the Way was unique among human beings. To cut off one's arm is easy enough, but to sever himself from someone he loved must have been exceedingly difficult indeed.[13] He would not have abandoned his filial obligations lightly.

He joined in with Daiman Kōnin's assembly, where he pounded rice day and night, neither sleeping nor resting for eight months.[14] In the middle of one night, he received the direct Transmission of Bodhidharma's kesa* and alms bowl. Even after he had obtained the Dharma, he still carried his stone mortar around with him, and for eight years he continued his rice pounding. Even when he entered the world in order to help ferry people to the Other Shore by giving expression to the Dharma, he did not set aside his stone mortar. This is ceaseless practice that is rare in any generation.

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12. Right perception is described in Buddhism as seeing things with the eye of compassion and wise discernment.

13. The reference to cutting off one's arm is to the Second Chinese Ancestor, Taiso Eka, who is said to have cut off his arm in order to find the Truth. This 'severing' may refer to giving up one's attachments rather than to a literal, physical act.

14. Though he was part of Kōnin's assembly, he lived there as a layperson and did not become a monk until some ten years later. Although 'pounding rice day and night' is often used in Zen texts solely as a metaphor for doing ceaseless practice, in this sentence it also alludes to the actual physical work that he did for the monastic community.

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Kōzei Baso did seated meditation for twenty years and received the Intimate Seal* from Nangaku. It has never been said that he set aside the practice of seated meditation after the Dharma was Transmitted to him and he began to help rescue others. When people first came to train under him, he always helped them to personally obtain the Mind seal. He was invariably the first to arrive for the monks' communal work periods.[15] He did not let up even after he became old. Those today who follow Rinzai are in Baso's lineage.

❀

Our revered Ancestor Ungan and the monk Dōgo were both exploring the Matter under Yakusan. Having made a vow together, they did not put their sides to their mats for forty years, so committed were they to thorough and unadulterated practice. Later, when Ungan personally Transmitted the Dharma to Tōzan Ryōkai, Tōzan remarked, "Desiring to realize Wholeness, I have been doing my utmost for twenty years to put the Way into practice by doing seated meditation." That Way of his has now been Transmitted far and wide.

❀

During the time while Ungo Dōyō was living in a hermitage on Three Peak Mountain, he was receiving nourishment from the Celestial Kitchen.[16] Once when Ungo was paying a visit to Tōzan, his spiritual doubt was settled through his realization of the Great Matter, after which he returned to his hermitage. When a celestial messenger came looking for Ungo to bring him nourishment once again, the celestial being could not see him, despite searching for three days. Ungo no longer needed to rely on the Celestial Kitchen, for he had made the Great Matter his sustenance. Try to emulate his determination to comprehend the Truth.

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From the time when Hyakujō Ekai was serving as an attendant monk to Baso until that evening when he entered nirvana, there was not a single day when he did

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15. Communal work customarily included such things as sweeping the temple grounds and gathering firewood.

16. It is said that before awakening to the Truth, a Buddhist trainee is served nourishment by celestial beings, but after the trainee has awakened to the Truth, those celestial beings can no longer serve the person food since the 'person' can no longer be seen.

not endeavor to work for the benefit of the monastic assembly and for the benefit of other people. Meditation Master Hyakujō was already an old monk of long standing when, thank goodness, he said, "A day when I do not work is a day when I do not eat." He still endeavored to do communal work just the same as those in their prime. The community felt sorry for him, but, though they expressed their pity for him, the Master would not quit. Finally, one day when he came to the communal work, the monks had hidden his tools and would not return them to him, so the Master did not take any food that day. His intention was to express his regret at not being able to participate in the monks' communal work. This story has become known as Hyakujō's "One day without work is one day without food." The traditions found in Rinzai's lineage—whose Transmission flows throughout Great Sung China today—as well as the traditions found in Buddhist monasteries far and wide, are, for the most part, based on the ceaseless practice of Hyakujō's profound principles.[17]

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When the revered monk Kyōsei Dōfu was Abbot in his temple, the deities of the place were never able to see the Master's face because they had no reliable means by which to do so.[18]

❀

In former times, Meditation Master Gichū of Mount Sanpei received nourishment from the Celestial Kitchen. After he encountered Daiten Hōtsū of Chōshū Province, the celestial beings sought Gichū out, but were unable to find him.

❀

The later revered monk of Mount Daii, Chōkei Daian, would say of his sojourn with Isan on the same mountain, "I stayed with Isan for twenty years. I supped on Isan food. I urinated Isan urine. But I did not explore Isan's Way. I have merely been able to raise one unsexed water buffalo that, all day long, is completely out in the open."

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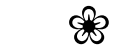
17. The principles which Hyakujō put forth in his writings are still fundamental to Zen Buddhist monastic practice today.

18. It is said that when someone is truly doing ceaseless practice, the deities that inhabit the environs of a temple cannot see that person, because that person is not wearing the 'face' of a false self.

Keep in mind that he raised that one unsexed water buffalo by means of his twenty years of ceaseless practice with Isan, who had himself continually explored the Matter within Hyakujō's community. Without fuss, quietly emulate his actions over those twenty years, and do not at any time forget them. Even though there are many people who explored Isan's Way, there must have been only a few whose ceaseless practice was their 'not having explored Isan's Way'.



The revered monk Jōshū Shinsai of Kannon-in Monastery was in his sixty-first year before he gave rise to the intention to realize the Truth and therefore began to seek the Way. Carrying his bottle gourd filled with water and his monk's traveling staff, he set out in search of a Master. He traveled far and wide in all directions, constantly saying to himself, "If even a child of seven has spiritually surpassed me, I shall explore the Matter with him or her accordingly. If even an old man of a hundred has not yet spiritually reached where I am, I shall instruct him accordingly."

It was with this attitude of mind that he did his utmost for twenty years to study Nansen's Way. At the age of eighty, he was installed as Abbot of Kannon-in Monastery, east of Jōshū City, and for forty years he spiritually guided ordinary people as well as those in loftier positions. Since he never sent out letters soliciting donations, his Monks' Hall was not large, lacking both a hall for the temple officers in front and a washstand in back. One time, the leg on his meditation platform broke. He tied a piece of charred firewood to it with some rope and, for years, went on using it for his training and practice. The temple officers wished to replace the leg, but Jōshū would not permit it. We should learn from this venerable Old Buddha's customary ways of doing things.

Jōshū lived in Jōshū Prefecture from his eightieth year on, after receiving the Transmission of the Dharma. He had received the authentic Transmission of the True Teaching, and people called him the Venerable Old Buddha. Those who had not yet received the authentic Transmission of the True Teaching must surely have been less imposing than Master Jōshū, and those who had not yet reached the age of eighty must surely have been more robust than he was. So how are those of us who are in our prime, yet still spiritually unimpressive, to equal one who is so deeply revered? Simply, by striving to do our utmost in ceaselessly practicing the Way. During those forty years, he did not accumulate worldly goods, and there was no rice or other grain in storage. Sometimes, chestnuts and acorns would be gathered and meted out for food; sometimes, one meal would be stretched out to

cover a couple of days. These were truly the customary ways of a dragon elephant* in the past, ways of training that we should aspire to.

One day, Jōshū addressed his community, saying, "If you did not depart from the monastery even once in your lifetime and did not speak for five or ten years, no one should call you a mute.[19] And after that, how could even the Buddhas do anything for you?" This points to ceaseless practice.[20]

Keep in mind that even though your not talking for five or ten years might give you the look of being dumb, and even though you might not talk due to your efforts not to depart from the monastery, still, you would not be a mute. The way a Buddha speaks is no different. Those who cannot hear the voice with which a Buddha speaks will fail to understand that someone who is not mute has gone beyond talking. Consequently, the most wondrous practice within ceaseless practice is 'not departing from the monastery'. The phrase 'not departing from the monastery' completely encapsulates the expression 'letting go of things'. The most foolish of people do not recognize a non-mute person, and do not help others to know 'such a one'* as a non-mute person. Even though no one prevents them from doing so, they do not help others to know 'such a person'. Pitiful indeed are those who have not heard that to be a non-mute is to be someone who has realized the state of 'being just what one is', or who do not even recognize that there is such a state of 'being just what one is'. Never abandon the ceaseless practice of not departing from the monastery. Do not be blown east and west by the prevailing winds. Even if you do not pay attention to the spring breezes and the autumn moons for five or ten years, there will be the Way that is free from delusions concerning sounds and forms. How one arrives at that Way is beyond our ability to know and understand. You should explore through your training just how precious each moment of your ceaseless practice is. Do not entertain doubts that the practice of not talking may be something vain and meaningless. Ceaseless practice is the one monastery that we enter, the one monastery that we emerge from, the one monastery that is the path left by flying birds, and the one monastery that is the whole universe.

19. In the Zen tradition, the term 'mute' is often used to describe trainees who are unable to give a response when a Master puts a spiritual question to them.

20. In other words, ceaseless practice is synonymous with not departing from one's spiritual seat and with not just talking about the practice but actually doing it.

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Mount Daibai is located in Keigen Prefecture. Goshō-ji Monastery was established on this mountain, and Meditation Master Daibai Hōjō was its founder. The Master was a man from Jōyō in Hubei Province.

> While training in Baso's community, Hōjō once asked the Master, "Just what is Buddha?"
>
> Baso replied, "Your very mind is Buddha."

Hearing this phrase, Hōjō immediately experienced the great realization. As a consequence, he climbed to the summit of Mount Daibai to be apart from human society. Living alone in a hermit's thatched hut, he survived on pine nuts and wore clothing he made from lotus leaves. On this mountain was a small pond, in which lotuses were plentiful. For more than thirty years he pursued the Way by doing seated meditation. He neither met anyone nor heard about any human affairs whatsoever, and he forgot about the passing years, seeing only the mountains around him turning now green, now yellow. You can imagine how wretched the winds and frosts were.

In doing seated meditation, the Master would place an eight-inch high iron pagoda atop his head, as if he were wearing a jeweled crown. By endeavoring to keep this pagoda from dropping off, he kept from falling asleep. This pagoda is still in his monastery today, and it is listed in the inventory of the temple's storehouse. Until his death, this is how he tirelessly trained in the Way.

He had been passing the months and years in this manner when, one day, a monk from Enkan's community arrived. The monk had come to the mountain in search of a suitable traveling staff, but he had wandered off the mountain path and fortuitously came upon the Master's hermitage.

> Unexpectedly, he encountered the Master, whereupon he asked him, "Venerable monk, how long have you been living on this mountain?"
>
> The Master replied, "All I have seen is the mountains about me now dyed green, now dyed yellow."
>
> This monk then asked him, "In what direction should I go to find the path out of the mountains?"
>
> The Master said, "Go by following the stream."
>
> The monk was struck by this response. So, when he returned, he told Enkan what had happened. Enkan said, "Some years ago when I was with Baso in Chiang-hsi Province, I once met a certain monk, but

I don't know what happened to him later. I wonder whether he could be that monk."

Later, when Enkan sent the monk to invite the Master for a visit, the Master would not leave the mountain. Rather, he composed a poem in reply:

Broken down yet living still, a withered tree aslant amidst the chill forest,
How many times have I met the spring, my heart unswerving?
Woodcutters pass this monk by, without even a backward glance,
So why does the carpenter eagerly desire to seek me out?[21]

The upshot was he did not pay Enkan a visit. Afterwards, he decided to move deeper into the recesses of the mountain, whereupon he composed the following poem:

From this pond, the lotus leaves I have taken for wear have known no end,
And from a few trees, the pine cones have supplied for my meals more than enough.
Now people from the world have discovered my dwelling place,
So I shall move my reed abode to enter a seclusion ever more deep.

Finally, he moved his hermitage further into the mountains.

One day, Baso had a monk go and expressly ask Hōjō, "Venerable monk, in former times when you went in deepest respect to train under Baso, what was the underlying principle you obtained from him that you then came to dwell on this mountain?"

The Master answered, "Baso turned directly to me and said, 'Your very mind is Buddha,' and then I came to dwell upon this mountain."

The monk then said, "These days his Buddha Dharma is different."

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21. 'Woodcutters' is a common metaphor in Zen Buddhism for disciples who are still working on cutting the roots of their past karma. 'The carpenter' is an allusion to Enkan as a spiritual master artisan.

> The Master asked, "In what way is It different?"
>
> The monk replied, "Baso now says, 'What is not mind is not Buddha.'"
>
> The Master responded, "That old fellow! I swear there is no end to his bewildering people! Even if that 'What is not mind is not Buddha' of his is so, well, I'll stick with 'Your very mind is Buddha.'"
>
> When the monk reported to Baso what Hōjō had said, Baso replied, "The Plum has fully ripened."[22]

This story is known by all, commoners and gentry alike.

Tenryū was a leading disciple of Master Hōjō, and Gutei was the Master's Dharma grandson. The Korean monk Kachi received the Transmission of the Master's Dharma and became the First Ancestor of his own country. All the Korean Masters today are Hōjō's distant descendants.

During his lifetime, a tiger and an elephant served him, and they did it without quarreling between themselves. After the Master's parinirvana, the tiger and the elephant gathered stones and mud, and built a stupa* for their Master. That stupa exists in Goshō-ji Temple even now. The Master's ceaseless practice has been extolled by good spiritual friends of the past and present alike. Those with limited wisdom do not recognize that they should praise his practice. To hold on tenaciously to the notion that Buddha Dharma can surely be found even amidst one's greed for fame and love of gain is a narrow, foolish view.

❀

Meditation Master Goso Hōen of once said:

> When my Master's Master first took up residence on Mount Yōgi, the rafters of the old buildings were in ruins and the damage from wind and rain was extensive. It was midwinter at the time. The temple halls throughout the monastery had long been damaged. The Monks' Hall was especially dilapidated. The snow kept drifting in, and it so filled the floors that there was nowhere for the monks to sit. Veteran monks, their hair white with age, were sweeping the snow off everything, including themselves, and shaggy eyebrowed monks of venerable years looked as though those brows were knitted with apprehension. The monks of the community were unable to do their seated meditation tranquilly.

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22. The name Daibai in Daibai Hōjō's name means the 'Great Plum Tree'.

> When one patch-robed monk asked in all sincerity whether repairs might be made, the old Master turned down the request, saying, "Our Buddha has said that this period of time corresponds to the degenerate eon, and that even high cliffs and deep valleys shift and change, never remaining constant. So, how can we possibly seek to sate ourselves by fulfilling our every wish? The saintly ones of olden times, for the most part, did their walking meditation on bare ground beneath the trees. This was the ancient and exemplary way of practice, a profound custom that went far beyond simply the form of walking. You have all left home life behind in order to pursue the Way, but you still have not learned how to use your hands and feet harmoniously. A monk's life lasts barely some forty or fifty years. Who has time to waste in vain pursuits, such as making ostentatious buildings?" So, the upshot was that he did not go along with the request.

The next day, in giving Teaching in the Dharma Hall, Goso gave instruction to his assembly, saying:

> When Yōgi first came to reside here as Abbot, the roofs and walls of the buildings had fallen into such neglect that the floors were completely covered with drifts of snow. We hunched up our necks and grumbled in the gloom. But then, with a change of heart, we recalled the old ones who had resided under trees.

Ultimately he never gave his permission for repairs, yet, even so, many itinerant monks from the Four Oceans and Five Lakes, clothed in their cloud-like robes and their mist-like sleeves, later asked to hang up their traveling staff in his community.[23] We should delight in the fact that there have so many who were avid for the Way. We would do well to engrave these words of Goso on our hearts and to impress them on our bodies.

Our Venerable Master Goso Hōen once gave Teaching, saying, "Practice is not something that lies beyond thoughts and feelings, and thoughts and feelings are not things that lie beyond practice." Give great weight to these words. Ponder upon them day and night; put them into practice from dawn to dusk. Do not allow yourself to be vainly blown about in all directions by the gusting winds. How much less could those who have left home life behind to pursue the Way possibly live a quiet, secluded life amidst luxurious accommodations! In Japan today, even the

23. 'The Five Lakes' is an allusion to China, whereas 'the Four Oceans' refers to the rest of the world.

'palatial homes' of royalty and their ministers are hardly splendorous, but are merely thatched cottages which are falling to pieces. If someone has obtained a luxurious estate, chances are it came from a wrong livelihood; it is rarely obtained from a pure one. A building that is already there is a different matter, but do not make plans for new constructions. Thatched hermitages and cottages were where the saintly ones of old dwelt; they are residences esteemed by the saintly ones of the past. Today's trainees should wish to be the same when exploring the Matter through their training, so do not make a mistake about this.

The Yellow Emperor and other Chinese emperors such as Yao and Shun were secular people, yet they lived in thatched houses and were an example for their nation. In a book by the Chinese writer Shih-tsu it says, "If you wish to see the practice of the Yellow Emperor, take a look at Hekung Palace. If you wish to see the practice of the emperors Yao and Shun, take a look at Tsung-ts'ao Palace. The Yellow Emperor's reception hall in Hekung Palace was roofed with thatch. Emperor Shun's reception hall in Tsung-ts'ao Palace was also roofed with thatch." Keep in mind that both Hekung and Tsung-ts'ao were thatched with straw.

Now, when we compare the Yellow Emperor, Emperor Yao, and Emperor Shun with ourselves, the difference is as great as that between heaven and earth. Even so, they used straw thatch for their reception halls. When even secular people reside in thatched dwellings, how can those who have left home life behind to be monks possibly aim at dwelling in lofty halls or elegant mansions? How unbecoming that would be! People of old would dwell under a tree or live in a forest, for these were the residences that both laymen and monks desired. The Yellow Emperor was a disciple of the Taoist Kuang-cheng of Mount Kung-tung. Kuang-cheng himself lived in a cave within Kung-tung Mountain. Today in Great Sung China, many heads of state and high-ranking ministers have carried on with this significant custom of emperors. As a consequence, even secular folk moiling about in their delusions do the same. How could those who have left home life behind to be monks possibly be inferior to secular folk who moil about in their delusions, or be as muddied by defiling passions as such folk? Among the Buddhas and Ancestors of the past, many received offerings of alms from celestial beings. Even so, once They had realized the Way, the eyes of the celestial beings could not see Them, and demons had no way to find Them.

We need to clarify this point. When celestial beings and demons keep to the daily conduct of Buddhas and Ancestors, they have a path by which they can approach the Buddhas and Ancestors. And, in that Buddhas and Ancestors far surpass celestial beings and demons, such celestial beings and demons have nothing by which to look up at Those who are so far off, so it is difficult for them to approach the vicinity of an Ancestor of the Buddha. As Nansen once said about

himself, "The training and practice of this old monk has lacked vigor, so I have been spotted by demons." Remember, to be spotted by a demon who has done no training is due to your lacking vigor in your own training and practice.

❀

Once, in the community of the Venerable Monk Wanshi Shōgaku of the Great White Mountain, one of the guardian deities said, "I heard that the Venerable Monk Wanshi has been residing on this mountain for over ten years, but whenever I have come to the Abbot's reception room to try to see him, I am never able to enter and still do not know what he looks like." Here, truly, we can see evidence of an exemplary person who has realized the Way. His temple on Mount Tendō was originally a small one.[24] While the Venerable Monk Wanshi was in residence there, he refurbished what had once been a Taoists' shrine, a female monks' temple, and a scholars' temple, and turned them into what is now Keitoku-ji Temple.

After the Master's death, the court secretary Wang Pai-hsiang compiled a record of the practices and deeds of the Master. A person once said to him, "You should have recorded the fact that the Master usurped a Taoist shrine, a female monks' temple, and a scholars' temple in establishing the present-day temple on Mount Tendō." Pai-hsiang replied, "No way! Such matters are not relevant to the merits of a monk." Many people at that time praised Pai-hsiang for this. Keep in mind that questions such as the one asked above are a function of secular thinking and are not relevant to the merits of a monk.[25]

Speaking more generally, from the very first moment that we begin to walk on the Buddha's Way, we far surpass the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form that ordinary people and those in lofty positions occupy. You should closely investigate the fact that Wanshi was not being manipulated by the three worlds, nor

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24. Mount Tendō is an alternative name for the Great White Mountain and for the temple which stands on it.

25. When Wanshi arrived, his small temple was in great disrepair. He renovated it and appropriated the three abandoned buildings mentioned to form the core of his monastery, which, in time, came to house some twelve hundred monks. In Wanshi's day, making use of abandoned non-Zen temples was a widespread practice by Zen monks, due to the phenomenal expansion of the Zen tradition and the rapid decline in support for other Buddhist traditions as well as for Taoism. Since the buildings, in effect, no longer belonged to anyone or to any organization, the term 'usurped' is inappropriate, deliberately insulting, and inaccurate. Wanshi simply made good spiritual use of something that had been abandoned or discarded—a common practice in Buddhism which can be most widely seen in the monks' use of discarded cloth to make monastic robes.

was he visible to the three worlds. You should do your utmost to thoroughly explore through your training the arising of body, speech, and mind, along with your inner experiences and the outer conditions that affect you. From the start, the meritorious activity of the Buddhas and Ancestors has great benefit in spiritually helping ordinary people as well as those in lofty positions. Even so, such people do not recognize that the ceaseless practice of Buddhas and Ancestors is helping to rescue them from their suffering. In ceaselessly practicing the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors now, do not get into discussions about great hermits and small hermits.[26] Do not talk about someone's being sharp-witted or thick-headed. Simply discard fame and gain forever and do not get all tied up in worldly things. Do not let time slip away. Put out the fire that is burning atop your head.[27] Do not wait for some great enlightenment experience, for the great enlightenment is synonymous with our everyday tea and meals. Do not aspire to 'non-enlightenment', for non-enlightenment is synonymous with the precious pearl concealed within the king's topknot.[28] Simply, should you be attached to home and homeland, separate yourself from 'my home and my homeland'. Should you have bonds of affection, separate yourself from 'my bonds of affection'. Should you have a good reputation, rid yourself of 'my reputation'. Should you have wealth, rid yourself of 'my wealth'. Should you own cultivated fields and gardens, rid yourself of 'my cultivated fields and gardens'. Should you have family, separate yourself from 'my family'. And you need to let go of 'my not having such things as fame and gain', as well. In ridding yourself completely of 'I have', the principle of also ridding yourself of 'I do not have' is clear. This is nothing other than the matter of ceaseless practice. Your letting go of fame and gain throughout your whole lifetime will be your ceaselessly putting into practice the One Matter, for it is this ceaseless practice that is as endless as the life of Buddha. Once you have established this ceaseless practice here and now, your ceaseless practice will be done by the ceaseless practice itself. And, you should love and respect your body and mind which are imbued with this ceaseless practice.

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26. An allusion to a poem by the Chinese poet Haku Rakuten:

    Great hermits dwell in courts and frequent market places;
    Little hermits go off into the hills or hide behind some bamboo fence.

27. A widely used Zen metaphor, alluding to an intense, single-minded effort to train, just as if your head were on fire and you were trying to put the fire out.

28. An allusion to a passage in the *Lotus Scripture*, in which the Buddha's Teaching of the Dharma is likened to a king giving someone a precious jewel which he has kept concealed in his topknot.

❀

Meditation Master Daiji Kanchū once said, "Explaining what one yard is cannot compare with putting one foot into action, and explaining what one foot is cannot compare with putting one inch into action." This sounds like Kanchū was admonishing people of his time who were being negligent in their ceaseless practice and who had forgotten about mastering the Buddha's Way. But it does not mean that it is incorrect to explain what one yard is: it means that putting one foot into practice takes more skill than explaining what one yard is. Why should we be limited to measurements in yards and feet? There could also be discussions about the comparative merits of far-off Mount Sumeru and a poppy seed. Sumeru is completely whole and a poppy seed is completely whole. The important point in ceaseless practice is just like this. The present explanation is not the way Kanchū put it, and it is the way Kanchū put it.

❀

Great Master Tōzan Gohon once said, "I put into words what I am unable to demonstrate by action, and I demonstrate by action what I am unable to put into words." This is the way a lofty Ancestor put it. His point is that his practice illumines the path that makes understandable what he has put in words, and his explanations have pathways that make understandable what he does as practice. Hence, what he preached in a day is what he practiced in a day. The point of this is that we practice that which is difficult to practice, and we explain that which is difficult to explain.

❀

Ungo Dōyō, having penetrated through and through what Tōzan had expressed, said, "At the time for explanation, there is no path for practice: at the time for practice, there is no path for explanation." This way of putting it is not saying that there is no practice or explanation. His 'time for explanation' is synonymous with one's 'not leaving the monastery even once in a lifetime'. His 'time for practice' is synonymous with the hermit's washing his head and then coming before Seppō.[29] Do not disregard or treat lightly his expression, "At the time for explanation, there is no path for practice: at the time for practice, there is

29. The allusions to not leaving the monastery and to the hermit's washing his head will be explored in detail by Dōgen later in Discourse 38: On Expressing What One Has Realized (*Dōtoku*).

no path for explanation." This is something that Buddhas and Ancestors of the past have continually asserted. It was once expressed in verse as:

> *Were you to live a hundred years*
> *Yet fail to see what the Nature of all Buddhas is,*
> *It would still not equal living even one day,*
> *Having rightly grasped the Matter.*

This is not something that one or two Buddhas have said: it is what all Buddhas are continually putting into words and putting into practice. Within the recurring cycles of birth and death over hundreds and thousands of myriad eons, one day in which there is ceaseless practice is a bright pearl within the topknot of the king: it is the Ancient Mirror within which we are born and die, and it is a day we should rejoice in. The strength of our ceaseless practice is a joy in itself. Those who have not yet attained the strength of ceaseless practice or received the Bones and Marrow of an Ancestor of the Buddha do not prize the Body and Mind of Buddhas and Ancestors or take delight in the True Face of Buddhas and Ancestors.

The true Face, Bones, and Marrow of Buddhas and Ancestors is not some thing that departs. It is a Tathagata's having come in this way and having gone in that way. It is beyond some thing that comes. Even so, we invariably receive our allotment of spiritual nourishment through our ceaseless practice of one day.

Thus, a single day must be of great importance. Were you to live in idleness for a hundred years, you would regret the days and months you had wasted, and you would be a shell of a person, one to be pitied. Even if you were to gorge yourself as a slave to sight and sound for a hundred years, yet within that time you performed ceaseless practice for just one single day, not only would you be putting your whole life of a hundred years into the practice, you would also be helping ferry other hundred-year-old beings to the Other Shore. Your life of this one day is the life you should cherish, the skeleton you should prize. Thus, if your life were to last but a single day, if on that day you grasped what the Nature of all the Buddhas is, then that life of one day would have surpassed many lifetimes spanning vast eons. So, if you have not yet grasped the Matter, do not squander one day idly. This one day of ceaseless practice is a precious jewel that you should prize. Do not compare it with the value of some foot-wide gem, and never exchange it, even for the Black Dragon's Jewel.[30] Sages of old prized it even more than their whole life.

Quietly think about it. You can ask for the Black Dragon's Jewel at any time, and can even get possession of a foot-wide gem along the way, but one day within

30. The Black Dragon's Jewel, which It holds under Its jaw, is a common Buddhist metaphor for the Buddha Dharma.

a lifetime of a hundred years, once gone, cannot come again a second time. Is there any skillful means by which we can have returned to us even one day that has passed? That is something you do not find recorded in any book. Those who do not idly let time pass by wrap up their days and months in that skin bag* of theirs so that the time will not leak away. This is why the saints of old and the former sages prized their days and months; they prized time more than they prized their own eyes and prized it more than their native land. To idly let time pass by means to be polluted and corrupted by the transient world of fame and gain. To not idly let time pass by means to act for the sake of the Path whilst being on the Path.

One who has already completely grasped the Matter will not let a day idly go by, but will do the practice for the sake of the Way and will explain the Way for the sake of the Way. Because of this, we have come to know the standards set by the Buddhas and Ancestors from ancient times, who did not vainly squander the efforts of even one day. This is something you should constantly reflect on. You should consider it even as you sit by a window, looking out on some slowly blossoming spring day, and do not forget it even as you sit in a humble abode on some desolate rainy night. How does time rob us of our efforts? Not only does it rob us of one day, it also robs us of the merits of many eons. What animosity is there between time and us? Sad to say, it will be our own lack of practice that robs us so. This is due to our not being on friendly terms with ourselves, to our thinking ill of ourselves. Even Buddhas and Ancestors have not been without Their loved ones, but They have let them go. Even Buddhas and Ancestors have not been without Their various involvements, but They have let them go. Even though we prize our relationships, such connections between ourselves and others are not things that can be held onto, so if we do not let go of our loved ones, chances are that our loved ones will let go of us, both in word and in deed. If you can have compassion for your loved ones, have compassion for them. To have compassion for our loved ones means letting go of them.

❀

When the Venerable Monk Nangaku Ejō was training under Daikan Enō, he attended on Enō for fifteen autumns. As a consequence, it was possible for him to be given the Transmission of the Dharma and the Precepts personally, just as if water from one vessel were being poured into another vessel. We should most dearly cherish the everyday behavior of this former Ancestor. The winds and frosts that plagued him during those fifteen autumns must have been many indeed. Even so, he persisted in practicing the Way purely and simply, and he is a paragon for us trainees of the present day. In winter, he slept alone in an empty hall with no coal for his stove. In the cool of summer nights, he would sit alone by his moon-lit

window having no candle. Even though he did not know everything and understood only half of what he knew, he had nothing further to learn about non-attachment. This was surely due to his ceaseless practice.

Speaking more generally, once we have discarded our greed for fame and our love of gain, it is simply a matter of striving to do the practice ceaselessly, day after day. Do not disregard this intention. Nangaku's saying, "When you explain what something is like, you have already missed the bull's-eye," reflects eight years of his ceaseless practice. It is this ceaseless practice that people of both past and present treat as rare and that both the clever and the inept earnestly desire.

While Great Master Kyōgen Chikan was cultivating his practice under Isan, he tried several times to give expression to the Way but was unable to do so. Deploring this, he burned his books and became the monk who served gruel and rice to his fellow monks, and so he passed his years, month after month. He later went to Mount Butō in search of old traces of National Teacher Echū. He built a thatched hermit's hut and, casting everything aside, he lived tranquilly and apart from human society.

One day, when he was sweeping off his walkway, he happened to hit a pebble, which struck a cane of bamboo. Upon hearing the sound it made, he suddenly realized the Way. He then took up residence as Abbot of Kyōgen-ji Temple, where it was his wont never to replace his one alms bowl and his one set of clothes. He dwelt amidst a landscape of strange rock formations and crystal springs, spending the rest of his life in secluded repose. Many traces of his practice still remain at his temple. It is said that it was his custom not to come down from the mountain.

Great Master Rinzai was a Dharma heir of Ōbaku. He was in Ōbaku's community for three years, during which time he devoted himself purely to pursuing the Way. Upon instruction from the Venerable Bokushū Chin,[31] he asked Ōbaku three times what the Great Intent of the Buddha Dharma is, whereupon he tasted the Master's staff again and again, for sixty blows. Still, his determination did not flag. When he went to Daigu, under whom he had his Great Realization, it was at the instruction of both venerable monks, Ōbaku and Bokushū. When it comes to the great heroic figures who have inherited the Dharma seat of the First Chinese Ancestor, Rinzai and Tokusan are usually spoken of. Even so, how could

31. Chin was also a Dharma heir of Ōbaku, and Rinzai's senior.

Tokusan possibly be considered the equal of Rinzai? Truly, someone like Rinzai is not to be corralled with the herd. Those who have been considered outstanding in recent times cannot even compare with those who were in the herd during Rinzai's time. It is said that his practices and deeds were pure and single-minded, and that his ceaseless practice was outstanding. Were we to try to imagine how many forms and how many ways his ceaseless practice had, none of us could come close to the mark.

> While Rinzai was residing with Ōbaku, he and Ōbaku took to planting pine and cedar trees together. On one occasion, Ōbaku asked him, "What is the use of planting so many trees here, deep in the mountains?"
>
> Rinzai replied, "First, to make something with a tasteful appearance for the benefit of the monastery, and second, to make signposts for the benefit of others coming later." Thereupon, he took his hoe and struck the ground twice with it.
>
> Ōbaku held up his traveling staff and said, "You are like this now, but you have indeed already tasted thirty blows from my staff."
>
> Rinzai gave out with a ho-hum sigh.
>
> Ōbaku said, "Our tradition will flourish in the world, with many coming to you."[32]

So on the basis of this, we should realize that even after he had realized the Way, he brought along a hoe in his own hands for planting such things as cedars and pines. It may have been because of this that Ōbaku said, "Our tradition will flourish in the world, with many coming to you." It must indeed be that the old traces of 'the trainee who planted pines' pointed directly to the one-to-one Transmission of Ōbaku and Rinzai.[33] Ōbaku, likewise, planted trees alongside Rinzai. In the past, Ōbaku displayed the ceaseless practice of leaving his assembly behind and going off to mix in with the laborers at the Daian Training Temple where he cleansed the halls. He cleansed the Buddha Hall, as well as the Dharma Hall. He did not expect his ceaseless practice to cleanse his heart and mind and he did not expect his ceaseless practice to cleanse his innate brightness. It was around this time that he met Prime Minister P'ei.[34]

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32. This quotation is from the *Sayings of Meditation Master Rinzai.*

33. 'The trainee who planted pines' is an epithet applied to the Fifth Chinese Ancestor, Daiman Kōnin.

34. The Prime Minister subsequently became a lay disciple of Ōbaku.

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Emperor Hsüan-tsung of the T'ang dynasty was the second son of Emperor Hsien-tsung. From the time he was small, he was quick-witted and astute. He always loved sitting in full lotus position and was constantly doing seated meditation in the palace. Mu-tsung was Hsüan-tsung's elder brother. After Mu-tsung had become emperor, once government business had concluded, Hsüan-tsung would playfully climb up on the imperial Dragon Throne and pretend that he was saluting various ministers. When the prime minister saw this, he thought Hsüan-tsung had cerebral palsy, and accordingly, reported this to Mu-tsung. When Mu-tsung saw his brother, he patted Hsüan-tsung on the head and said, "My little brother is the bright one in our family." At the time, Hsüan-tsung had just turned thirteen.

In the fourth year of the Tseng-ch'ing era (824 C.E.), Mu-tsung passed away peacefully. He was succeeded by his three sons. The first became Emperor Ching-tsung, the second became Emperor Wen-tsung, and the third became Emperor Wu-tsung. Ching-tsung succeeded his father to the throne and passed away three years later. Wen-tsung succeeded him to the throne for just one year before court ministers schemed to ease him out. When Wu-tsung ascended the throne, Hsüan-tsung, who had not yet ascended the throne, was residing in his nephew's kingdom. Wu-tsung made a habit of referring to Hsüan-tsung as 'my fool of an uncle'. Wu-tsung was emperor during the Hui-ch'ang era (841–846) and was the person who banned the Buddha Dharma. One day, Wu-tsung summoned Hsüan-tsung and ordered that he immediately be put to death for having climbed up onto the throne of Wu-tsung's father in the past. His corpse was placed in a flower garden behind the palace and waste matter was poured over it, whereupon he came back to life.

He then left his father's land and secretly entered the community of Meditation Master Kyōgen, where he shaved his head and became a novice. However, he did not take the full Precepts.[35] Making the rounds of temples along with Meditation Master Shikan, he arrived at Mount Rozan, whereupon Shikan composed a couplet on the topic of the local falls:

Boring through cliffs, bursting through rock, never declining from its toil,
By distant lands are seen the heights from which it falls.

35. That is, when ordained as a novice he would have taken the Ten Great Precepts, but he had not yet gone so far in monastic training as to take the two hundred and fifty *Vinaya* Precepts or the Bodhisattva Precepts.

By this couplet, he was attempting to lure the novice into revealing just what kind of person he was spiritually. The novice continued this verse with the following:

What can stem this valley torrent
From surging back to the Ocean Great?

Upon hearing this couplet, Shikan knew that the novice was no ordinary person.[36]

Sometime later, Hsüan-tsung entered the community of Enkan Saian,[37] which was in the region of Hangchow, and was assigned to serve as the Abbot's Chief Clerical Officer. At the time, Meditation Master Ōbaku was serving as Enkan's Chief Priest. And, as a consequence, Hsüan-tsung sat on the platform next to Ōbaku.

> One day when Ōbaku had entered the Buddha Hall and was doing prostrations to the Buddha, Hsüan-tsung entered and asked him, "Since we are not to seek for anything based on an attachment to Buddha, or an attachment to the Dharma, or an attachment to the Sangha, what, pray, do you hope to accomplish, Venerable Monk, by doing prostrations?"
>
> Having been asked in this way, Ōbaku turned towards Hsüan-tsung, slapped him, and said, "I am not seeking anything due to an attachment to the Buddha, nor am I seeking anything due to an attachment to the Dharma, nor am I seeking anything due to an attachment to the Sangha. I am simply doing my prostrations just as I usually do them." When he had finished speaking in this manner, with one hand he gave Hsüan-tsung another slap.
>
> The Clerical Officer said, "You play rough!"
>
> Ōbaku responded, "Right here is where the What resides! So why speak of rough or genteel?" Again, he gave Hsüan-tsung a slap with his hand, whereupon Hsüan-tsung silently took his leave.

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36. It was a common practice in China for a traveler, whether alone or with a companion, to compose a poem inspired by an encounter with a particularly beautiful scene. If one were accompanied, the companion was expected to supply a couplet to complete the traveler's couplet. This custom was sometimes used by Zen Masters to test the spiritual attainments of a companion, someone who was usually a monk, but one who had not yet been declared a Master.

37. In some versions of the text, Dōgen comments that Enkan was later named as National Teacher by Hsüan-tsung when the latter become Emperor for a short while.

After the death of Emperor Wu-tsung, Hsüan-tsung returned to lay life and ascended the throne. He abolished Wu-tsung's ban on the Buddha Dharma, and forthwith reinstated It. From the time of his ascending to the throne and throughout his reign, Hsüan-tsung was ever fond of doing seated meditation. Before he ascended to the throne, he had left the country of his father, the king, and was traveling the countryside, following the valley streams with Shikan, doing his utmost to practice the Way purely and simply. It is said that after he ascended to the throne, he did seated meditation day and night. Given that his father the king was already deceased, his elder brother the emperor had also passed away, and he himself been put to death by his own nephew, he truly resembled a destitute child worthy of our pity. Nevertheless, he did his utmost to pursue the Way with unswerving determination. His is an excellent example, wondrous and rare in the world. His ceaseless practice must have been open-hearted and spontaneous.

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After the venerable monk Seppō Gison had given rise to the intention to realize the Truth, he never neglected his seated meditation, day or night, regardless of where he was. And he did so even though the paths between the monasteries where he would hang up his traveling staff and the places that sheltered him upon his journey were far apart. From the time when he clearly manifested his True Nature by his founding his monastery on Mount Seppō, he did not let up on his practice, and he died whilst doing seated meditation. In earlier times, in order to put his spiritual questions to a Master, he climbed Tōzan's mountain nine times and visited Tōsu Daidō three times, which was his doing his utmost to pursue the Way. This is something wondrous and rare in the world. In promoting the integrity and rigor of ceaseless practice, many people today speak of Seppō's lofty practice. Seppō's attachments were on a par with those of other people, but his astuteness was not something that others could match. Ceaseless practice is like that. People who follow the Way today should learn from Seppō's ceaseless practice of spiritually washing himself clean. When we quietly look back on Seppō's physical exertion in exploring the Matter with Masters in all directions, truly, this must have been due to the merit that he inherited from some saintly bones in a previous life.

When people today wish to enter the assembly of a Meditation Master who has realized the Way and ask their spiritual question in order to explore the Truth with such a one, it is extremely difficult for them to find a chance to do so. They are confronted not with just some twenty or thirty skin bags,* but with face after face of hundreds of thousands of people, all of whom are seeking the way back to their True Nature. The day on which a Master offers them a helping hand soon

darkens into night, and the night that they spend pounding rice in their mortar soon brightens into another day. Sometimes, when the Master gives an informal talk, they act as though they lacked eyes and ears, and so they gain nothing from what they see and hear. When they are finally in possession of their eyes and ears, the Master has already finished what he has to say. While kind, elderly monks of great virtue are clapping their hands and loudly guffawing in their delight in the Dharma, it seems as though newly ordained novices rarely have a chance to even come in contact with their bowing mats. There are those who enter the Master's private chambers and those who do not, and there are those who hear the Master's promise of realizing enlightenment and those who do not. The days and nights pass even more swiftly than an arrow, and this dewdrop of a life is even more fragile than our body. There is the grief of having a Master yet being unable to explore the Matter through training with him, and there is the grief of wanting to explore the Matter yet being unable to find a Master. I have personally witnessed such situations as these.

Although good spiritual friends may know a person well, the opportunities for contacting them when they themselves are diligently cultivating the Way are rare. It is likely that when Seppō, long ago, climbed up Mount Tōzan and climbed up Mount Tōsu, he too must surely have endured just such hardships. We should recognize the integrity of his ceaseless practice, which serves as an excellent model, for to fail to explore the Matter through your training with a Master is to be regretted indeed.

It was at the behest of the Venerable Hannyatara that the First Ancestor of China came from the West to the Eastern lands. During the frosts and springs of his three years in sailing the seas, how could the winds and snows have been the only miseries? How the clouds and mists must have billowed up over the roiling waves! He was attempting to go to an unknown land. To do something like this would never have occurred to ordinary people who hold dearly to life and limb. This must have been due to his ceaseless practice that sprang from his great desire to earnestly Transmit the Dharma and to instruct those who are deluded by their passions. This was so because it was he himself who Transmitted the Dharma, and it was so because it is the whole universe that Transmits the Dharma, and it was so because the whole universe in all ten directions is the words and ways of Truth, and it was so because the whole universe in all ten directions is Bodhidharma himself, and it was so because the whole universe in all ten directions is the whole universe in all ten directions. What karmic conditions in any life are not like Shakyamuni's royal palace, and what royal palace may not serve as a spiritual training ground?

This is why he came from the West as he did. Because it was he himself who instructed those who are deluded by their passions, he had no fears or doubts, nor did he act from timidity or awe. Because it was the whole universe that instructed those who are deluded by their passions, he had no fears or doubts, nor did he act from timidity or awe. Leaving behind his father's kingdom forever, he fitted out a large ship, crossed the southern seas, and arrived at Canton Province. Undoubtedly the crew was a large one and there were many monks to serve his needs, but chroniclers have failed to record this. Upon his reaching the shore, no one there knew him. It was the twenty-first day of the sixth lunar month in the eighth year of the Chinese P'u-t'ung era during the Liang dynasty (August 3, 527). The governor of Canton Province, a man named Hsiao-ang, made a show of extending to him all the courtesies of a host, giving him an audience and plying him with entertainments. Hsiao-ang then wrote an account to inform Emperor Wu about him, for Hsiao-ang was punctilious in his duties. When Emperor Wu saw the report, he was delighted and sent a messenger to invite Bodhidharma to pay him a visit. That was on the first day of the tenth lunar month of that year (November 9, 527).

> When the First Ancestor arrived at the city of Chinling, he had an audience with Emperor Wu of Liang, whereupon the emperor said to him, "Since the time when I ascended to the throne, I have so excelled in building temples, in copying the Scriptures, and in permitting both men and women to become monks that my deeds must be quite beyond anyone's ability to keep a record of. So what merit have I accrued?"
>
> The Master replied, "There is no merit in any of these."
>
> Dumbfounded, the emperor asked, "Why, pray, are they lacking in merit?"
>
> The Master replied, "Such deeds are merely the results achieved by ordinary people and those in lofty positions who follow the Lesser Course.* Such seeking after merit defiles one's deeds. It is like a shadow following a form: even though it exists, it is not the real thing."
>
> The emperor then asked, "What, pray, is true merit?"
>
> The Master answered, "One's immaculately wise discernment being wondrous and fully realized, and one's body being naturally unbounded and tranquil. Merit like this is not sought by the worldly-minded."
>
> The emperor then asked, "What is the paramount Truth of the Holy Teachings?"

The Master replied, "Since the Truth is devoid of any limits, It is beyond holiness."

The emperor then demanded, "And who, pray, is this one who is confronting my royal presence?"

The Master replied, "I do not personally know that One."[38]

The emperor had failed to awaken to what Bodhidharma was pointing to, and the Master realized that the occasion was not opportune. So, on the nineteenth day of the tenth lunar month (November 27), he snuck away to north of the Yangtze River and arrived at Loyang on the twenty-third day of the eleventh month of that year (December 31). He lodged temporarily at Shōrin-ji Temple on Mount Sūzan, where he sat all day long, silently facing a wall in meditation. The ruler of the Wei dynasty was spiritually confused and did not recognize who Bodhidharma was, and he did not even recognize that this failure was a reason for feeling shame.

Bodhidharma was of the warrior caste of Southern India. He had lived in the royal palace of a large kingdom, so he was long accustomed to the ways of a royal palace in a large kingdom. In the manners and customs of small nations, there were habits and views that would prove shameful for an imperial ruler of a large nation, but the First Ancestor did not have a heart that was disturbed by such matters. He did not reject the country, nor did he reject its people. At that time, he did not respond to the slanders of Bodhiruchi or despise him for making them, nor did he find the evil-mindedness of the Vinaya Master Kōtō worth resenting or even paying heed to.[39] Even though Bodhidharma's spiritual merits were great, the people of China looked upon him as if he were a conventional teacher of the *Tripitaka* and its commentaries, for they were befuddled due to their being followers of the Lesser Course. And there were some who thought that Bodhidharma was expounding a course of Dharma which they named 'the Zen Sect', and they believed that what was being taught by others—such as non-Buddhist scholars, for instance—and the True Teaching of the First Ancestor must surely be the same. These were the views of petty creatures who were helping to defile the Buddha Dharma.

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38. That is, my True Nature is beyond anything my intellect can directly know.

39. During that time, there were two Indian scholars named Bodhiruchi: one was an eminent translator of Scriptures and the other was a scholar who was envious of Bodhidharma. It is the latter Bodhiruchi who is referred to here. The Chinese Vinaya Master Kōtō was a translator and writer of Scriptural commentaries. Both tried to discredit Bodhidharma's focus on meditation practice, and it is said that both attempted to poison him.

The First Chinese Ancestor was the twenty-eighth in the line of Shakyamuni Buddha's direct heirs. He left the large realm of his father the king in order to spiritually help sentient beings in the East. Who could stand head-and-shoulders with him? If the Ancestral Master had not come from the West, how could sentient beings in the East have possibly learned of the Buddha's True Teaching? They would only have distressed themselves—and to no avail—with 'the grit and stones' from which we fashion the names and forms we give things.[40] Even those today in the hinterlands or in some even more distant realm, like ours, where people clothe themselves in fur and adorn their heads with horns, have been able to hear the True Teaching to Its utmost. Today, even peasants and farmers, old country folk and village children learn of It, and all due to having been spiritually rescued through the Ancestral Master's ceaseless practice in crossing the seas. The cultures of India and China differ greatly as to what they are superior or inferior in, and there are vast differences as to what their local customs consider to be morally upright or depraved. China was not a place to which a great saintly person who had been Transmitted and who was keeping to the Teaching and the Scriptures would normally go, unless he was someone of great compassion and great enduring strength. There were no Meditation Halls in which he could reside, and those who recognized 'such a person' were few. So he hung up his traveling staff at Mount Sūzan for a stay of nine years. People called him 'the Brahman who looks at a wall'.[41] Chroniclers have included him among the ranks of those learning how to meditate, but this is not the way it was. He and he alone was the Ancestral Master who possessed the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching which had been Transmitted to him through Buddha after Buddha and heir after heir.

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The following quotation is from the *Forest Records*, compiled by Shih-men:

> Bodhidharma first went from the kingdom of Liang to the kingdom of Wei. He traveled to the foot of Mount Sūzan and rested his traveling staff at Shōrin-ji Temple. He simply sat in stillness, facing a wall: he was not engaged in learning how to meditate. For a

40. The 'grit and stones' is another way of saying the 'tiles and stones' with which our mind builds its discriminative 'walls and fences'.

41. Dōgen makes a distinction between what people literally saw when they looked at Bodhidharma sitting in front of a wall and what Dōgen earlier described as Bodhidharma's 'facing a wall as he sat silently in meditation', which carries the figurative connotation of facing the walls of his own mind.

long time no one could figure out why he was doing that and, consequently, interpreted it as his learning how to meditate.

Now, meditation in its narrow sense is simply one among various practices, so how could it suffice to say that this was all there was to the Saintly One? Yet, people of his time did just that. Those engaged in making chronicles followed suit and reported him as being among the ranks of those learning how to meditate and grouped him with people who are as dead trees or cold ashes.[42] Even so, the Saintly One's practice did not simply stop at doing meditation; he also did not act contrary to meditation. And even with the yin and yang described in the *Book of Changes*, he did not act contrary to yin and yang.

When Emperor Wu of Liang first met Bodhidharma, he asked him, "What is the paramount Truth of the Holy Teachings?"

The Master replied, "Since the Truth is devoid of any limits, It is beyond holiness."

The emperor went on to ask, "And who, pray, is this one who is confronting our royal presence?"

And the Master replied, "I do not personally know that One."

If Bodhidharma had not been fluent in the local language, how could the discussion have gone like this at that time?[43]

It is clear from this that Bodhidharma went from the empire of Liang to that of Wei, that he traversed to Mount Sūzan, and that he hung up his traveling staff at Shōrin-ji. Even though he simply sat in stillness, facing a wall, it was not in order to 'learn how to meditate'. And even though he had not brought with him a single copy of a Scripture, he was the authentic Successor who came to Transmit the True Teaching. Be that as it may, chroniclers are not clear about the matter and, sad to say, list him among those learning how to meditate, which is the height of folly.

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42. 'Dead trees and cold ashes' is a common Zen Buddhist figure of speech for someone who has dropped off self. In the present context, it implies that Bodhidharma had gone just so far in his practice, but no further.

43. Shih-men's final remark may be in reference to an oft-held view that Bodhidharma sat at Shōrin-ji Temple, silently staring at a wall, because he could not speak Chinese. Bodhidharma's final remark, in particular, shows that he clearly knew the difference between the words *pu chih* (Modern Chinese: *pu chih-tao*) "I do not know" and *pu shih* (Modern Chinese: *pu jen-shih*) "I do not know him." This is analogous to the differences between the German *'Ich weiss nicht'* and *'Ich kenne ihn nicht'*, or between the French *'Je ne sais pas'* and *'Je ne le connais pas'*.

Thus it was that, while he was doing his walking meditation, there was a dog who would yap at the Great One.[44] Alas, that too was the height of folly. How could anyone with a heart possibly take lightly their indebtedness to the Master for his compassion? How could anyone with a heart possibly fail to repay this indebtedness? There are many people who do not forget their indebtedness to the world in which they live and who treat it responsibly: we call them human beings. The great indebtedness that we owe to our Ancestral Master surely surpasses that which we owe to our parents, so do not compare the beneficent love of the Ancestral Master with that of a parent for a child.

Should people become concerned about the humbleness of their status, they may feel fear over not having visited China, not having been born in China, not knowing any saintly person, never having met a sage, and not having anyone around them who has ever risen to a lofty position. Their human mind is wholly befuddled due to such misgivings. Since the dawn of history, there has been no one in our country who has changed his worldly habits, nor do we hear of a time when our country was cleansed of them. This is due to our not knowing what 'clean' means or what 'muddied' means. We are like this due to our being in the dark about what the causes and effects of the two princely powers and the three universal powers are, to say nothing of our ignorance of the waxing and waning of the five elements of wind, fire, earth, metal, and water.[45] This folly of ours is due to our being in the dark about the sounds we hear and the forms that are right before our eyes. And this darkness is due to our ignorance of the Scriptures and our lack of a teacher of Scriptures. Our lacking such a teacher means that we do not know how many dozens of Scriptural texts there are, or how many hundreds of poems or thousands of sayings there are in these texts, or, if we read just the commentaries on some text, how many thousands of poems or tens of thousands of sayings they may contain. People who know the ancient Scriptures and have read the ancient texts have been inclined to venerate the Ancient Ones. If we have a heart that venerates the Ancient Ones, then the ancient Scriptures will manifest before our very eyes.

Both the founder of the Han dynasty and the founder of the Wei dynasty were emperors who clearly understood the poems that astrological events

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44. The larger context implies that 'dog' here refers not to an animal but to a person who is constantly breaking Precepts.

45. The two princely powers are the authority of a ruler to bestow rewards and to mete out punishments. The three universal powers are associated with the heavens, the earth, and human beings.

expressed and who could read the lay of the land. When people clearly understand classic texts such as these, then they have a bit of understanding of the three powers: heavenly, earthly, and human. Folks of our country, never having been ruled by saintly lords like these, do not know how to serve a lord or even how to serve one's parents. As a result, they are pitiful as subjects of a lord, and pitiful as members of their family clan. Whether they are ministers or children, they vainly pass by jewels a foot-wide in span and squander moments of time to no purpose. No one born into family clans like these has yet had an important national office conferred upon him. They even prize insignificant government positions. This is how it is in confused times like ours; in saner times, behavior like this was rare indeed. While we are cherishing lowly lives like these in a remote land such as this one, we may chance to hear the True Teaching of the Tathagata; how then could we possibly have the heart to cling to these lowly lives? Were we to persist in clinging to them, for what purpose, pray, would we attempt to drop them off at a later date? Even if you were someone weighty and wise, you should not begrudge your life for the sake of the Dharma, so how much less should you begrudge a life that is mean and lowly! Even though it may be mean and lowly, if you unbegrudgingly abandon your life for the sake of the Way and the Dharma, you will be more hallowed than those in the highest heaven, more exalted than even a universal monarch. In sum, you will be more exalted than any celestial being, earthly deity, or sentient being within the worlds of desire, form, or beyond form.

Our First Chinese Ancestor Bodhidharma, on the other hand, was the third son of the king of Kōshi in Southern India. Thus, He was already an imperial prince in the royal bloodline of India. In China and its bordering nations, which should have shown respect for his nobility and dignity, people did not yet know the forms of etiquette by which they should attend on him. There was no incense or flowers. They were remiss in supplying him with a cushion to sit on and the temple accommodations were wretched. How much worse it would have been in our country, a remote island with enormous crags! How could we possibly know the customs by which one pays respect to the ruler of a large country? Even if we tried to imitate them, they would be too intricate for us to comprehend, since those customs might well be different for noblemen and for imperial personages, and expressions of respect for them might have varying degrees of formality, but we would not know how to distinguish among them. When we do not know the value of a person, we do not support and take responsibility for that being, and when we do not support and take responsibility for a person, we need foremost to clarify the value of that being.

Our First Chinese Ancestor Bodhidharma was the twenty-eighth successor to the Dharma of Shakyamuni. Once he had entered the Way, he became more and

more impressive. The reason that such a great and revered saint did not spare his life in following his Master's instructions was so that he might Transmit the Dharma and rescue living beings. In China, before the First Ancestor came from the West, no one had ever encountered a disciple of the Buddha who had received the one-to-one Transmission from Successor to Successor, no Ancestor had given the Face-to-Face Transmission from Successor to Successor, and no one had ever encountered a Buddha. And even after that time, apart from the distant descendants of the First Chinese Ancestor, no one could be found who had ever come from the West. The flowering of an udumbara blossom once every three thousand years is easy to predict: one need only count the months and years left before it blooms, but the First Ancestor's coming from the West will not happen a second time. At the same time, that bunch who mistakenly call themselves distant descendants of the Ancestral Master are besotted, like that great fool in the Kingdom of Ch'u who was unable to tell the difference between a jewel and a stone.[46] And, due to their dearth of knowledge and shallow understanding, they have fancied that even pedantic teachers of Scriptures and cerebral scholars could stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the Master. Those who failed to plant the genuine seeds of spiritual wisdom in past lives do not become descendants in the Way of the Ancestors, for they have idly wandered off onto the false path of names and forms, and are to be pitied.

There were people who were still going to India after the P'u-t'ung era of the Liang dynasty, and for what? This was foolishness in the extreme. Depending on how their bad karma led them, they wandered about in foreign countries. Step by step, they proceeded down false paths that were an insult to the Dharma; step by step, they were running away from their Father's True Home. And what, pray, was gained by their going off to India? Nothing but suffering the hardships from crossing great mountains and obstructing waters. Without examining the principle that India had already come to the East, they did not clearly see what the eastern advance of the Buddha Dharma was, so that they futilely wandered about, lost in the labyrinths of India. Although they had a reputation for seeking the Buddha Dharma, they lacked an earnest desire for the Way-seeking Mind, so that they did not meet any genuine Masters in India, and vainly encountered only pedantic teachers of Scriptures and cerebral scholars. Even though genuine Masters were still present in India, these travelers lacked the true spirit that seeks the True Teaching, and, as a result, the True Teaching did not come within their grasp. Some claimed that they had met a genuine Master upon their arrival in India, but we have

46. 'The great fool' is a reference to the king of the ancient Chinese kingdom of Ch'u who, when presented with a large uncut jewel, rejected it because he thought it was just a big stone.

yet to hear who those Masters were. Had they met genuine Masters, they would naturally have named names, but there have been no such names mentioned because there were no such encounters.

Further, after our Ancestral Master came from the West, there were many monks in China who relied on a mundane understanding of the Scriptures and commentaries, and thus failed to encounter the True Teaching. Even though they may have read the Scriptures and commentaries, they were still in the dark as to Their meaning and purpose. These blind deeds were due not only to the force of their karma from the present but also to the force of bad karma from their past lives. During this lifetime of theirs, they have not heard what the Tathagata's keys to the Truth are, nor have they encountered the Tathagata's True Teaching, nor have they been illumined by the Tathagata's face-to-face Transmission, nor do they employ the Tathagata's Buddha Mind, nor have they heard of the tradition of the Buddhas. What a sad life theirs must be! In the Sui, T'ang, and Sung dynasties in China, people like that were plentiful. To put it simply, only people who have planted the seed of wisdom in past lives have become the distant descendants of the Ancestral Master. Some have entered via the gate of training without expectations, and others by letting go of their preoccupation with counting grains of sand. All of them are bright-minded trainees, trainees most capable of understanding, and genuine seeds of a 'real person'. For ever so long, befuddled and ignorant folks have merely taken up lodging in the thatched hut of the Scriptures and commentaries. At the same time, the Master did not quit in the face of dangerous frontiers, nor did he avoid them. If we today who still revere the profound principle of our First Ancestor's coming from the West should, nevertheless, be sparing of these stinking skin bags we call ourselves, what, ultimately, would be the purpose of that?

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Zen Master Kyōgen once said in verse:

A hundred plans, a thousand schemes
All made just for this self of ours alone,
As though this body could yet evade
Its future in some dusty grave.

Say not that white-haired corpses mute
Take all their secrets to their tombs.
For they are the ones who fully know
What death's domain is all about.

Accordingly, even though we make a hundred plans and a thousand schemes to hold onto our self, as he said, yet ultimately we are reduced to dust within some burial mound. How much worse to have countless bodies and minds uselessly endure untold thousands of hardships and myriad miseries whilst galloping off east and west in the service of the ruler or citizenry of some small nation! Following custom, some of our people hold their own existence lightly, being unable to forego committing ritual suicide upon the death of their lord. The journey ahead for those who are driven by such a sense of obligation will be filled with obscuring mists and clouds.

Since ancient times, there have been many who have thrown away life and limb as ordinary citizens in the employ of some minor official. These were human bodies that should have been treasured because they could have been vessels for the Way. Now that you have encountered the True Teaching, you should explore the True Teaching through your training, even though you forsake lives as numerous as the hundreds of thousands of grains of sand in the Ganges. For which is it worthwhile to forsake life and limb: for some small-minded person or for the broad, vast, deep, and far-reaching Buddha Dharma? Neither the nimble nor the maladroit should be concerned with whether they are going forward or backward. Calmly reflect upon the fact that before the True Teaching had spread throughout the world, people could not encounter It, even if they had been willing to give up their own life for the sake of the True Teaching. They might well envy those of us today who have encountered the True Teaching. We should be ashamed to encounter the True Teaching and yet fail to give up life and limb for It. If we should be ashamed of anything, we should be ashamed of this failing.

So, the only way to repay our great indebtedness to the Ancestral Master is by our ceaseless practice all day long. Pay no heed to your own existence. Do not cling to love and affection, which is more foolish than the behavior of birds and beasts. Even if you are attached to feelings of love, they will not remain with you over the long years. Do not remain dependent on your family's standing within a clan, which is like so much rubbish. Should you remain like this, ultimately you will not have a tranquil and peaceful existence. The Buddhas and Ancestors of the past, being wise, all tossed aside the seven worldly treasures* and the thousand things they spawn, and They quickly abandoned Their jeweled palaces and scarlet-lacquered mansions as well. They viewed such things as if they were sweat and spittle; They looked upon them as though excrement and dirt. This is the model for recognizing and repaying one's indebtedness by which all the Buddhas and Ancestors have habitually repaid the Buddhas and Ancestors of the past. Even the sick sparrow did not lose sight of his indebtedness and was able to repay it by

means of the three spheres of public office.[47] Even the trapped turtle, not losing sight of his indebtedness, was able to repay it by means of Yōfu's seal.[48] What a pity it would be for someone to be even more foolish and dull-witted than beasts while having the face of a human being.

In that we have encountered Buddha and heard the Dharma today, we are indebted for the loving-kindness evinced by the ceaseless practice of each and every Buddha and Ancestor. Had the Buddhas and Ancestors not directly Transmitted the Dharma to us, how could It possibly have reached us in the present? We should repay our indebtedness for even a single line of verse, and we should repay our indebtedness for even a single Teaching. How much more should we repay our immeasurable indebtedness for the unsurpassed great Dharma of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching! All day long, we should desire to give up our own lives, which have been as innumerable as the sands of the Ganges. In generation after generation, we should bow in deepest respect and make alms offerings to the bodies that we have abandoned for the sake of the Dharma. Together with all the celestial beings, dragons, and divine spirits, we should venerate and esteem these bodies, for they are something to protect and praise, because the principle of gratitude underlying this veneration is indispensable.

The practice of the Brahmans who buy and sell skulls has long been reported in India. They have deeply revered the numerous, meritorious virtues of the skulls and bones of those who have hearkened to the Dharma. Now, if we do not give up our own lives for the sake of the Way, we will not attain the meritorious virtue of having heard the Teaching. If we hearken to the Dharma without giving a thought for life and limb, that hearing of the Dharma will fully ripen, and this skull of ours will be revered. The skull that we have not yet given up for the sake of the Way will one day be tossed in some vacant field and left to bleach in the sun. Who then

47. A reference to a classic Chinese story concerning a boy who helped a sick sparrow recover and to whom the sparrow gave four silver rings as recompense, which ultimately led to the boy's being appointed to three high government positions.

48. A reference to a classic Chinese story in which a man rescued a trapped turtle. As the turtle swam off, it looked back over its shoulder to its benefactor, as if to acknowledge its indebtedness. Later, the man rose to a high official position, and, when the seal of his office was cast, it miraculously appeared in the form of a turtle looking over its back. No matter how many times the seal was recast to remove the form, it would nevertheless reappear on the seal. Finally, the man realized that somehow the turtle had played a part in his having received his appointment, so he kept the strange seal out of gratitude.

will bow out of respect for it? Who would buy or sell it as a relic? We surely would look back upon our attitude and spirit of today with regret.

There was once a demon who angrily reduced his former bones to dust, and there was a celestial being who bowed in respect to his former bones.[49] When we think ahead to a time when, no matter what, we will be transformed into dust, those of us who had no attachments to craving in our present life will feel sympathy for others in the future. And this feeling of sympathy that is aroused may well be akin to the tears of an onlooker. Fortunately, by using our present skull—which will ultimately turn to dust and which people may well look upon with disgust—we can ceaselessly practice the True Teaching of the Buddha. For this reason, do not fear suffering from the cold, for suffering from the cold has yet to destroy anyone, nor has it ever destroyed the Way. Do not fear training, for not training is what destroys a person and what destroys the Way. Do not fear the heat of summer, for the heat of summer has yet to destroy anyone, nor has it ever destroyed the Way. Not training can well destroy both a person and the Way. The accepting of barley and the choosing of bracken, which involved both monks and laity, are excellent examples of this.[50] We should not copy hellish creatures and beasts by seeking for blood or seeking for milk. Simply, ceaseless practice all day long is precisely what the everyday practice of Buddhas is.

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Our great Ancestor Eka, the Second Chinese Ancestor, was of lofty virtue. He was a magnanimous and cultured person, adored by deities and daemons, both of whom were drawn to him. He was esteemed alike by followers of the Way and by the worldly. He resided for a long time between the rivers Ii and Lo, where he read extensively on a wide variety of subjects. He was considered to be a person rare in any country, one who is seldom encountered. Because of the loftiness of his

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49. The demon was angry with his former body because, due to the karmic consequences of that being's breaking the Precepts, he was born into the suffering of the hells. On the other hand, the celestial being was grateful to his former body because, due to that being's keeping the Precepts, he was born into the bliss of a heavenly state.

50. 'The accepting of barley' refers to an incident in which the Buddha, along with many of his assembly, was invited to a feast. The host, however, got distracted and forgot to prepare the meal, so that all he could offer his guests was the barley that he kept stored for feeding his horses. Since the barley was offered with a pure heart, the Buddha and His monks accepted it without judgment.

'The choosing of bracken' refers to a story of two noblemen who fled to the mountains after their country had been seized by a tyrannical warrior-king, since they preferred eating bracken as free men to eating the warrior-king's millet as his slaves.

Dharma and the dignity of his virtuous ways, a strange and wondrous being suddenly appeared and said to him, "If you really desire to receive the fruits of your endeavors, why do you tarry here? The Great Way is not far off. Just go to the south."

The following day, the Ancestor suddenly had a stabbing headache. His teacher at the time, a teacher of meditation named Kōzan Hōjō of Dragon Gate Mountain in Loyang, was about to treat his condition when a voice from out of the blue said, "This is due to an altering of the skull and is not an ordinary headache." Our Ancestor then told his teacher about his encounter with the strange and wondrous being. When the teacher looked at the top of Eka's head, it was as if five peaks had blossomed forth, whereupon he said, "This feature of yours is an auspicious sign, and you will surely have an awakening to the Truth. This wondrous being's telling you to go south is because Great Master Bodhidharma of Shōrin-ji Temple is undoubtedly to be your Master." Heeding these instructions, our Ancestor Eka then left in order to train with Bodhidharma, who was residing atop a remote mountain peak. As for the wondrous being, he was a guardian deity who, for a long time, had been doing his own training in the Way.

The mid-winter weather was cold, for it is said to have been the night of the ninth day of the twelfth lunar month. Even if there had not been any great snowfall, a winter's night deep in the mountains atop a high peak is not the time or place to be standing outside someone's window, as you can well imagine, for it was that time of year which is so dreadfully cold that the joints of bamboo would split open. Notwithstanding that, a deep snow did indeed cover the earth, burying the mountains and concealing the peaks, as Eka sought his way, plowing through the drifts. How dangerous it must have been! He ultimately reached the Ancestor's quarters, but the Ancestor did not give him permission to enter. Indeed, he did not even bother to turn around and look at him. That night, Eka never dozed off, or sat down, or took a respite. He stood firm, without moving, waiting for the dawn to break, as the night snow continued mercilessly on, piling up layer upon layer until it buried his waist. His tears froze upon his cheeks as they fell, drop by drop. Catching sight of his tears only led him to shed more tears, and reflecting upon himself only led him to reflect more deeply upon himself. He thought to himself, "In the past, some of those who sought the Way would break their bones to get at the Marrow, or prick open their Blood that they might succor those who hungered for It, or spread out their Hair to cover the mud, or throw themselves off cliffs to feed the Tiger.[51] Those of old were just like this. So what kind of person am I?"

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51. These allusions refer to various legends and past life stories. While they have often been

Thinking in this way encouraged him to be more and more resolute. We trainees of today must not disregard his remark, "Those of old were just like this. So what kind of person am I?" The moment we lose sight of this, we sink into eon upon eon of delusion. By thinking in this way, his resolve to search for the Dharma and to seek the Way only intensified. In that he did not treat the purity that resulted from his cleansing himself in this way as 'my being pure', it was possible for him to be pure.[52] To surmise what that night of slow dawning was like is enough to break one's innermost heart. The hairs on one's body simply bristle with cold fear.

> Just as the dawn was breaking, the First Ancestor, taking pity on him, asked, "What do you seek that you have stood such a long time in the snow?"
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> When Eka heard this, his sorrowful tears fell in greater profusion as he replied, "I simply ask that you, Venerable Monk, out of your great benevolence and compassion, open the Gate to the Sweet Dew so that I may ferry all manner of beings far and wide to the Other Shore."
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> Having been asked in this way, the First Ancestor said, "The wondrous, unsurpassed Way of all the Buddhas is to be most diligent over vast eons of time in ceaselessly practicing what is hard to practice and in ceaselessly enduring what seems beyond endurance. If you desire the True Course whilst relying upon little virtue and less wisdom, or on a frivolous heart, or on a prideful and conceited mind, surely you will toil in vain."
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> When Eka heard this, he became more and more encouraged by this instruction. Hidden from sight, he took the Keen-edged Sword and cut off his left forearm.
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> When he placed this before the Master, the First Ancestor then knew that Eka was indeed a vessel for the Dharma.[53] So he said, "In

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interpreted only on a literal level, the present translation attempts to point the reader to deeper, non-literal meanings based on figures of speech found in Zen Buddhist writings.

52. That is, Eka had been cleansing himself of any self-serving motives or hidden agendas.

53. While the account of Eka's cutting off his arm has often been taken literally, and so depicted in paintings, there is a deeper, non-literal interpretation of what took place, one that does not support the notion that self-mutilation is somehow proof of one's willingness to do ceaseless practice. This interpretation states that Eka used Manjushri's Keen-edged Sword of Wise Discernment to cut himself free of dualistic thinking, and, though this act was not visible to the naked eye, Bodhidharma was able to discern what was going on within Eka's heart and

> Their seeking the Way, all the Buddhas, from the first, have laid down Their own bodies for the sake of the Dharma. Now you have cut yourself free of your arm right before me, which is proof that there is also good in what you are seeking."

From this time on, Eka had entry into the Master's innermost private quarters. For eight years he served as attendant to the Master through thousands of myriad endeavors. Truly, he was a great, reliable spiritual friend for both ordinary people as well as for those in loftier positions, and he was a great teacher of the Way for them. Deeds such as his were unheard of even in India and came to exist for the first time in the Eastern lands. We hear of Makakashō's face long ago breaking into a smile: we learn of Eka's getting to the Marrow.

What we need to reflect on is that, even if a thousand myriad First Ancestors came from the West, if the Second Ancestor had not been doing his ceaseless practice, we today would be unable to learn how to put the Great Matter to rest. Today, now that we have been able to encounter and hear the True Dharma, we should, beyond doubt, gratefully repay our indebtedness to the Ancestors. Any attempt to repay our gratitude with external objects cannot begin to truly repay our gratitude. Even one's own bodily existence will be insufficient repayment. And even one's nation or hometown is of no real value. Nations and cities are plundered by others or passed on to kith and kin. Our physical lives are entrusted to what is impermanent, put into the hands of rulers and their ministers, and abandoned to false ways. Thus it is that any attempt to repay our indebtedness by offering such as these will not be the practice of the Way.

Simply, our day by day ceaseless practice will be the true way to repay that indebtedness. The principle of which I speak is to do one's ceaseless practice in such a way that we do not neglect our daily life or waste it in selfish pursuits. And why so? This life is due to the merit from our ceaseless practice in times past and we are indebted to that ceaseless practice for it, a debt that we should be quick to repay. How sad, how shameful it would be to turn these physical shells of ours, which have come alive due to the merit of the ceaseless practice of the Buddhas and Ancestors, into useless toys for our spouse and children, letting ourselves be

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mind. For instance, Eka did not ask Bodhidharma to open the Gate to the Sweet Dew for his own sake but for the sake of all sentient beings, and by this Bodhidharma knew that Eka was a True Vessel for the Dharma. The original text does not state what Eka actually placed before Bodhidharma. It may well not have been a physical arm that he offered to the Master, but rather his willingness to commit himself to the ceaseless practice that Bodhidharma had just been instructing him in.

playthings for our spouse and children, and to do so without any regret for breaking Precepts and debasing ourselves. It is out of wrong-mindedness and folly that we turn our lives over to the demons of fame and gain, for fame and gain are the great thieves. If we give importance to fame and gain, then we will sympathize with fame and gain. To sympathize with fame and gain is to commit ourselves to fame and gain, and to thereby bring about the destruction of a life in which we might otherwise have become an Ancestor of the Buddha. Commitment to spouse and children, family and clan, are also just like this. Do not study fame and gain as if they were dreams and illusions, or were flowers in the sky; study their effects upon human beings. Do not sympathize with fame and gain, letting the retributions from your misdeeds pile up. When you use your true Eye to explore all the myriad thoughts and things in the ten directions through your training, you should go about it in this way.

Even an ordinary, worldly person with normal human emotions, upon being given gold, silver, or rare jewels will repay the favor with thanks. All those who have a warm heart will strive to repay the friendliness of kind words and a gentle voice with expressions of gratitude. How could anyone with a human face be oblivious to their great indebtedness to the Tathagata from encountering and heeding His unsurpassed True Dharma? Not to lose sight of this indebtedness is itself a precious treasure for a lifetime. The skull and bones of a being who has never retreated or turned aside from this ceaseless practice, either in life or in death alike, has such spiritual merit that it deserves to be enshrined in a stupa adorned with the seven treasures and to be given offerings of alms by all celestial and human beings. If any people are aware of this great indebtedness, they will not vainly let their lives, which are as transient as the dew on the grass, go to ruin, but will wholeheartedly repay the Second Ancestor for his monumental virtue. This is what ceaseless practice is. And those of us who do the ceaseless practice as the Buddhas and Ancestors have done it will receive the merit of this ceaseless practice. In sum, neither the First Ancestor nor the Second Ancestor ever founded a temple, nor did they have the arduous task of mowing down wild grasses.[54] And the Third and Fourth Ancestors were like this too. And the Fifth and Sixth Ancestors also did not establish their own temples, and both Seigen and Nangaku were no different.[55]

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54. ‘Mowing down wild grasses’ literally refers to clearing an uncultivated area for the purpose of erecting a temple.

55. Seigen and Nangaku were coequal Dharma heirs of the Sixth Ancestor. The Sōtō branch of the Zen tradition traces its lineage back to Seigen, whereas the Rinzai branch traces its

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Great Master Sekitō fastened a grass hut to a boulder and then sat in meditation atop this rock. He did not doze off day or night, for there was not a time when he did not remain seated in meditation. Without neglecting his obligations to the monastic community, he habitually endeavored to do seated meditation throughout all the hours of a day. It is due to the great strength of Sekitō's steadfast ceaseless practice that Seigen's tradition has flowed out and permeated the world to the profit of both ordinary people and those in lofty positions. All those in the lineage of Ummon and Hōgen who have clarified the Matter are also Dharma descendants of Great Master Sekitō.

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At age fourteen, our Thirty-first Ancestor, Meditation Master Daii Dōshin, met the Great Master who was our Third Chinese Ancestor. For the next nine years he undertook the responsibility of serving him. From the time when he inherited the Ancestral practices of the Buddhas and Ancestors, he kept his mind meditatively alert without dozing off and without letting his ribs touch his mat for sixty years. He bestowed his Teaching on those who were hostile and those who were friendly, and his virtue pervaded the realms of both ordinary people and those in lofty positions. He was our Fourth Chinese Ancestor.

> In the seventeenth year of the Chen-kuan era (643 C.E.), Emperor T'ai-tsung, leaning favorably towards Master Daii's particular taste for the Way, desired to see the monk's imposing presence and so invited him to the capital. Three times altogether, the Master sent humble letters of apology, ultimately declining each invitation on the grounds of ill health. The fourth time, the emperor commanded an emissary to go and fetch him, saying, "If he really will not come to visit our royal presence, then take his head and bring me that."
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> When the emissary reached Daii's mountain, he warned him of the emperor's command, whereupon the Master stretched out his neck in the direction of the emissary's sword with a demeanor of majestic dignity. The emissary, thinking this strange indeed, returned and informed the emperor of the event. The emperor's admiration for Daii

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lineage back to Nangaku. Dōgen's lineage includes both branches, the Rinzai through his Ordination Master and the Sōtō through his Transmission Master.

only increased. Accordingly, he bestowed upon him a gift of fine quality silks and let him have his way.

Thus, the Meditation Master who is our Fourth Ancestor did not turn life and limb into his life and limb. His ceaseless practice of not becoming intimate with kings and ministers is an example seen perhaps once in a thousand years. Emperor T'ai-tsung was a ruler with integrity, so their meeting would probably not have been a frivolous one, yet even so, you need to explore through your training that this was the ceaseless practice by such a senior monk and spiritual guide as this. As a ruler of men, T'ai-tsung did not begrudge his life and limb, and he all the more admired someone else who did not begrudge their life and limb but instead stuck out his neck in the direction of a sword. And this was not simply idle behavior on the Master's part for, prizing time, he considered his ceaseless practice to be of primary importance. His proffering letters of refusal three times is an example rare in any generation. It is a sign of our degenerate times that there are now monks who hope and pray for an audience with someone of royal blood.

On the fourth day of the intercalary ninth lunar month[56] in the second year of the Yung-hui era (651 C.E.) during the reign of Emperor Kao-tsung, Master Daii, in expounding the Dharma for those who were with him at the time, said, "All thoughts and things are completely free of suffering and delusion. Let each and every one of you preserve and keep this in mind. In the future, spread it abroad."

When he had finished speaking, he passed away whilst sitting peacefully in meditation. He had lived for seventy-two years. They placed his body in a stupa within the temple grounds. On the eighth day of the fourth lunar month of the following year (652 C.E.), the door of the stupa inexplicably opened of its own accord, and his bodily form looked as if it were still alive. After this, those who were at the temple did not dare to close the door again.

Keep in mind what he said: all thoughts and things are completely free of suffering and delusion. This does not mean that thoughts and things are as empty

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56. There are twelve months of either twenty-eight or thirty days in the Chinese and Japanese lunar calendar. Since this creates a discrepancy with the 365-day solar calendar, every two or three years a thirteenth lunar month is inserted (intercalated) in the calendar at some point. In the present instance, it was inserted between the ninth and tenth lunar months. This is technically known as an intercalary lunar month. An analogy can be found with our inserting the day of February 29 every four years to even out the annual solar calendar, and that day is technically called an intercalary day.

space, nor does it mean that thoughts and things are something other than thoughts and things. It means that thoughts and things are all, each and every one of them, completely free of suffering and delusion. Now, there was our Fourth Ancestor's ceaseless practice before he entered the stupa and there was his ceaseless practice after he had been placed in the stupa. To observe that those who are alive will ultimately perish is but a small-minded view. And to hold the opinion that those who have perished are beyond thinking or perceiving anything is also a narrow view. When it comes to studying the Way, do not copy such small-minded and narrow views. There may well be those among the living who do not perish, and there may well be those among the dead who have thoughts and perceptions.

Great Master Gensha Sōitsu of Fukien Province, whose Dharma name was Shibi, was a person from the Minhsien district. His family belonged to the Sha clan, and from an early age he was fond of fishing. He sailed a small boat upon the Nant'ai River and was friendly with the various fisherfolk thereabouts. At the beginning of the Hsien-t'ung era (ca. 860 C.E.) during the T'ang dynasty, when he was just thirty, he suddenly desired to leave the dust of lay life behind. So, he abandoned his fishing boat and, joining the assembly of Meditation Master Fuyōzan Reikun, he shaved his head. He received the full Precepts from Vinaya Master Dōgen of Kaigen-ji Temple in Yüchang.

Dressed in a hempen robe and straw sandals, and with barely enough food to sustain life, he would customarily sit in stillness throughout the day. All the members of the assembly took this to be strange. From the first, he was a brother in the Dharma with Seppō Gison, and the closeness of their relationship was like that of Master and disciple. Because of Shibi's stringent practice, Seppō, when addressing him, would refer to him as being austere.

> One day, Seppō asked him, "Is this Shibi the Austere Monk?"
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> Shibi responded, "I have never dared to deceive anyone about that!"
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> On another occasion, Seppō called out to him, "O Shibi, my austere monk, why haven't you gone out on a pilgrimage to seek a Master to train with?"
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> Shibi responded, "Bodhidharma did not come east to China for that, nor did the Second Ancestor go west to India for that!"
>
> Seppō highly praised what he had said.

Eventually, Shibi climbed Mount Zokotsu and joined Master Seppō in his efforts to build a temple there.[57] A large number of serious followers gathered to train in this temple. They would enter the Master's private quarters to raise questions and resolve issues, never wearying of this practice from morn till dusk. Among those serious trainees who had come from all directions, if there was someone who had a particular, personal problem that was still not resolved, that person would invariably go and ask the Master about it, whereupon the venerable monk Seppō would say, "You should go ask that of Shibi the Austere Monk." Master Shibi, out of his benevolence, would forthwith endeavor to address the matter. If he had not had his preeminent ceaseless practice, he could not have engaged in such daily conduct. The ceaseless practice of sitting in stillness throughout the day is a ceaseless practice that is rare indeed. Even though there are many who vainly gallop off after sounds and forms, rare are those who endeavor to sit in stillness throughout the day. Those who have entered into training late in life should fear that the time remaining to them is short indeed, and so they should endeavor to sit in stillness through their remaining days.

The venerable monk Chōkei Eryō was a revered senior monk training under Seppō.[58] For twenty-nine years he went back and forth between Seppō and Shibi, exploring the Matter through his training with both of them. During those months and years he wore out twenty sitting mats. There are people today who love doing seated meditation and, citing Chōkei, they take this beloved ancient one as their model. Those who idolize him are many; those who equal him are few.

At the same time, his efforts for thirty years were not in vain. There was a time when he was rolling up a bamboo blind in the doorway of the Meditation Hall and suddenly had a great awakening. During those thirty years, he never returned to his home country, or visited his relatives, or chatted with those sitting on either side of him; he just put his efforts into the Principle Matter. The ceaseless practice of this Master went on for thirty years. For thirty years he treated his doubts and misgivings as doubts and misgivings: we should speak of him as someone of keen wit who did not ignore anything, as someone with great potential for realizing the Truth. Reports of such firmness in resolve are sometimes met with when studying the Scriptures. When we desire what we should desire and feel shame about what

57. Mount Zokotsu is the earlier name for Mount Seppō, where Meditation Master Seppō was attempting to establish his new monastery.

58. Chōkei later succeeded Seppō as the Abbot of Seppō's monastery.

we should feel shame about, then we may encounter Chōkei. To speak the truth, it is only due to a lack of heart for the Way and a lack of skill in handling their daily conduct that people become vainly tied to fame and gain.

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After Meditation Master Isan of Mount Daii received affirmation of his awakening from Hyakujō, he straightaway climbed up the steep and remote slopes of Mount Isan where he made friends with the birds and beasts, thatched himself a hut, and continued on with his training. He never strove to retire from the winds and snows, and he supplied himself with various kinds of wild chestnuts for food, as he had no temple buildings or monastery gardens. Even so, for forty years he manifested ceaseless practice. Later, he became famous throughout China because of all the dragon elephants* who beat a path to his door. Even if you should wish to establish a temple as your own pure place, do not concern yourself with the quagmire of public opinion, just hold steadfast to doing the ceaseless practice of the Buddha Dharma. Doing one's training without having a temple compound was the training ground for ancient Buddhas. We have heard from afar Their custom of training in open fields and under trees. These places have for ever so long become 'enclosed realms'.[59] Wherever there is ceaseless practice by one person, such a place will be handed down as a training ground of the Buddhas. Do not become obsessed with constructing buildings, like foolish people in the degenerate days of the Dharma do. The Buddhas and Ancestors never craved buildings. Those whose Eye has not yet become clear and who therefore arbitrarily construct temple buildings and monastery halls are not making alms offerings of Buddhist buildings for the Buddhas, but are doing it for the sake of their own lairs of fame and gain.

Calmly imagine the ceaseless practice that was happening on Mount Isan long ago. What I mean by 'imagine' means thinking about how it would be for us today if we were residing on Mount Isan. The sound of the rain deep in the night was probably not just of water washing over the moss, for the rain would certainly have had the strength to bore through boulders. On the snowy nights in the dead of winter, the birds and beasts must have been scarce indeed, and how much less would there have been smoke from man-made fires to acknowledge human existence! It was a way of living that could not have been tolerated, were it not for the Master's ceaseless practice in which he made light of his life whilst stressing

59. 'Enclosed realms' is a technical term referring to areas that were set apart and preserved for use by Buddhist communities in India. Later, it was used in China and Japan to refer to monastery grounds.

the Dharma. He was in no hurry to cut down the undergrowth, nor did he engage in cutting down trees to clear the land for building. He just continued his ceaseless practice and simply did his utmost to practice the Way. What a pity that an authentic Ancestor who had Transmitted, and kept to, the True Dharma came to undergo such hardships in such precipitous mountains! It is said that Mount Isan had many ponds and running water, so there must have been thick ice and dense banks of fog. Most people could not have tolerated such a secluded life, nevertheless Isan transformed it into the Buddha's Way and explored Its innermost purpose. Today, we are able to learn of his expressions of the Way and Its purpose because of the ceaseless practice that he did. Even though we may not be listening with a casual attitude, we still need to recognize our indebtedness to his strenuous efforts in ceaseless practice. When we hear about what he did and imagine the hardships he faced, how can those of us today who are heartfelt trainees possibly fail to feel pity for him? Due to the transformative power derived from Isan's ceaseless practice of the Way, the winds cease their howling, the world remains intact, the palaces and dwelling places of the celestial community are tranquil, and the homelands of human beings are preserved. Though we may not be direct descendants of Isan, he will be our Ancestor in spirit.

Later, Kyōzan Ejaku came and served as Isan's attendant. Kyōzan had previously trained with his late Master Hyakujō. Though he was a veritable Shariputra with a hundred responses for every ten questions,[60] for three years he trained under and attended on Isan while doing his utmost to oversee his own buffalo.[61] His was a ceaseless practice that has become extinct in recent times and is no longer seen or even heard of. In tending to his buffalo for three years, there was no need for him to seek for a well-put expression of the Matter from someone else.

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Our Ancestor Dōkai of Mount Fuyō manifested a pure wellspring of ceaseless practice. When the ruler of the nation tried to bestow upon him the title of Meditation Master Jōshō along with a purple kesa, our Ancestor would not accept them and wrote a letter to the emperor politely declining his offer. Although the ruler of the nation censured him for this, the Master, to the end, did not accept them. His rice broth has passed down to us the taste of the Dharma. When he built his hermitage on Mount Fuyō, the monks and laity streamed to his refuge by the

60. Shariputra was the chiefmost of the Buddha's ten great disciples, being the monk whom his fellow monks viewed as 'having all the answers'.

61. That is, he worked at training himself in accord with his own karmic propensities.

hundreds. Because he served them only one bowl of gruel as a day's rations, many of them left. The Master, upon a vow, did not partake of any meals offered by donors. One day he pointed out the Matter to his assembly, saying the following:

> To begin with, those who have left home behind to become monks have a distaste for the dust and troubles stirred up by defiling passions and seek to rise above birth and death. And they do so in order to give their hearts and minds a rest, to abandon discriminatory thinking, and to eradicate entanglements, which is why it is called 'leaving home'. So, how can it possibly be all right for monks to indulge in conventional ways of living by being neglectful and greedy? Straight off, you should discard all dualistic notions and let neutral ones drop off as well. Then, whenever you encounter any sights or sounds, it will be as if you were trying to plant a flower atop a stone, and whenever you encounter gain or fame, it will resemble getting dirt in your eyes. Moreover, it is not that, since beginningless time, no one has ever done this, or that no one has ever known how. Simply, we just stop reversing our head and making a tail out of it.[62] If we stop our training at this point, we will suffer from our cravings and greeds, but why do we need to do so? If we do not bring them to a halt right now, when will we deal with them? Therefore, the saintly ones of the past, who were ordinary human beings, invariably and thoroughly exhausted these cravings in each moment of the present. If we can exhaust them in each moment of the present, what more is there to do? If we are able to be calm in heart and mind, it will be as if even 'the Buddhas and Ancestors' become our enemy. When everything in the world has become naturally cooled down and impermanent for us, then, for the first time, we will be in accord with the Other Shore.
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> Have you not heard of Inzan, who, to his dying day, did not wish to meet with anyone? Or of Jōshū, who, to his dying day, did not wish to speak with anyone? And there is Hentan, who gathered various kinds of chestnuts for his food. Daibai made his clothing out of lotus leaves, and the lay practitioner Shie only wore clothes made from paper, whereas the veteran monk Gentai wore only cotton cloth. Sekisō built a Hall for Withered Trees where he and his community did their sitting and lying down, only requiring of his monks that their hearts and minds

62. That is, getting things upside down by taking the false self to be our True Nature.

completely quiet down.[63] Tōsu had others prepare the rice, which they cooked for everyone so that all could dine together. Tōsu himself used the meal preparation time to examine the Matter on his own. Now, the saintly ones listed above had characteristics like these. If they did not have such strong points, how could anyone have entrusted themselves to them? O my virtuous ones, if you too master yourself in this way, you will truly be an unfaltering one. If, on the other hand, you do not dare to take charge of yourself, you will, I fear, simply waste your strength in the future.

Though there has been nothing in this mountain monk's own practice to be particularly commended, I have been privileged to be head of this mountain monastery. So how could it possibly be all right for me to sit here, squandering our communal provisions and forgetting about our connection with the former saintly ones? Now what I desire is to try to give you, right off, a concrete example of how the temple heads of old behaved. I have consulted with various senior monks about this. We will not go down from our mountain, nor betake ourselves to meals offered by lay donors, nor have a monk in charge of fund raising.[64] Simply, we will divide into three hundred and sixty equal parts whatever crops we harvest in one year from our own fields and then use one part of this each day, regardless of whether our numbers increase or decrease. If our supply of rice is sufficient, we will make steamed rice. If there is not enough rice for that, we will make rice gruel. And if there is not enough to make rice gruel, we will make rice broth. For the interview with new arrivals, we will simply serve tea, foregoing the customary tea ceremony with cakes.[65] We will simply arrange a tearoom that we can go to and make use of on our own. We need to strive to sever our connections with the secular world and just concentrate on doing our utmost to practice the Way.

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63. A Hall for Withered Trees is an epithet for a Monks' Meditation Hall.

64. In addition to its literal meaning of not staying in one's place of training, 'going down from the mountain' has non-literal implications, such as leaving the monastery in order to visit the lay world, as well as leaving one's training behind in order to participate in worldly affairs.

65. This tea ceremony is not the same as that often associated with Japanese Zen. Rather, it is part of the face-to-face encounter with newly arriving trainees, during which the Abbot will endeavor to assess the quality and depth of the guest's spiritual intention and actual training.

And what is more, our life is already complete and our landscape lacks for nothing. The flowers teach us how to smile: the birds teach us how to sing. The Wooden Horse neighs loud and long: the Stone Cow gallops apace. Beyond the blue horizon, the form of the green mountains fades away: when distant from our ears, the voice of the babbling brook does not exist. Atop the mountain peaks, the monkeys chatter: in the sky, the moon is steeped in mist. Within the forest, the cranes cry out: at break of day, the wind swirls through the pines. When the breezes of spring rise up, the withered trees sound forth the Dragon's song: when the leaves of autumn wither, the chill woods scatter their flowers abroad. The jewel-like stepping-stones make patterns in the moss: the faces of people take on the hue of haze and mist. Distracting sounds have become hushed: conditions are just what they are. The Underlying One stands alone: nothing needs to be contrived.[66]

I, a mountain monk, facing all of you here today, am setting forth what the gateway to our monastic family is: it is not getting all wrapped up in what have simply been expedient means. Why should it be necessary for any Master today, upon entering the Dharma Hall to give Teaching or upon letting trainees enter his private chambers for instruction, to imitate some Master of old by picking up the drum stick, or holding his ceremonial hossu* upright, or shouting towards the east, or pointing his traveling staff* to the west, or raising his eyebrows, or looking with glaring eyes—and all this done in the manner of one who is sick with rage? Not only does such behavior belittle those training in the Meditation Hall, even worse, it treats with contempt one's indebtedness to the saintly ones who have gone before.

Have you not realized that Bodhidharma came from the West and, having arrived at the foot of a remote mountain, sat facing a wall for nine years? And the Second Ancestor's standing in the snow and

66. This pastoral portrait is composed of various Buddhist and Zen expressions descriptive of experiences encountered through one's spiritual training and practice, and is a way of demonstrating that all things in nature are giving voice to the Dharma. For instance, the flower that teaches one to smile is an allusion to Shakyamuni's holding aloft the udumbara blossom and Makakashō breaking out into a smile of recognition of the Truth underlying the Buddha's gesture. Also, the Wooden Horse neighing and the Stone Cow galloping are Zen-derived metaphors referring to the natural functioning of one's Buddha Mind and one's immediate, spontaneous response to that functioning.

severing his forearm can only be described as his suffering hardships. Even so, Bodhidharma never gave forth a single word of Scripture and the Second Ancestor never asked him for a single phrase of Scripture. Further, in speaking of Bodhidharma, do we think he was unable to teach anything for the sake of human beings? In speaking of the Second Ancestor, do we think that he was not seeking a Master?

Whenever this mountain monk gets to the point of expounding what the saintly ones of old did, I immediately feel as if there were no place on earth where I can hide, for I am overwhelmed with shame at the weakness of us people of these later times. And what is more, having already been supplied with the four necessities—nourishment, clothing, bedding, and medicine—we treat ourselves to delicacies served in a hundred different ways and then have the cheek to say that one should, by all means, give rise to the Buddha Mind. I simply fear that our physical behavior is so compulsive that we will continue on, passing through myriad lives in the six worlds* as a result. Our days fly by like arrows, and we should deeply regret wasting them.

Even though we are like this, there may still be people who have reached the Other Shore by relying on their strengths. And this mountain monk cannot compel you to learn. And, my virtuous ones, have you encountered the following poem by one of old?

From our mountain fields, millet harvested for our meal,
From our garden, plain yellow leeks;
Whether you eat from what there is to eat is up to you,
And if you choose not to eat thereof, feel free to go
where you will.

I pray that, on reflection, each of you, my companions on the Path, will practice diligently. Take good care of yourselves!

This is the very Bones and Marrow of the direct, Face-to-Face Transmission of our Ancestral lineage. Even though the ways of ceaseless practice by our founding Ancestors are many, I have given you this one for the present. We trainees today should want to do the ceaseless practice that was cultivated on Mount Fuyō, and we should explore that practice in our training, for it is the correct standard established at Jetavana Monastery.[67]

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67. Jetavana was a grove purchased from Prince Jeta by the lay patron Sudatta, who gave it to the Buddha for Him and His community to use in their training and practice.

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Baso Dōitsu of Kagen-ji Temple in the Hungchou District of Kiangsi Province was a native of Shihfang Prefecture in the district of Hanchou. He trained and served under Nangaku for over ten years. One day, with the intent of revisiting his home, Baso reached the halfway point on his journey. From this halfway point, he came back to the temple, making an incense offering and bowing in respect to Nangaku, whereupon Nangaku composed the following poem for Baso:

I recommend that you do not return to your former home;
Should you return to that home, your practice of the Way
will wane,
And the old women of your neighborhood
Will call you by your former name.

When he gave Baso these words of Dharma, Baso reverently accepted them and made a vow, saying, "I will never return again to Hanchou, not even in future lives." Having made this vow, he never again took even one step towards Hanchou. He lived in Hungchou for the rest of his life, leaving others to come and go from all directions. Apart from expressing the Way simply as "Your very mind is Buddha," he had not a single word of Teaching for the sake of others. Be that as it may, he was Nangaku's Dharma heir and a lifeline for both ordinary people and those in lofty positions.

Just what is this "Do not return to your former home?" What are we to make of it? Traveling to and from the east, west, south, or north is simply the continual arising of our false self. Truly, this is to return to our home and have our practice wane. Is one doing a ceaseless practice which recognizes that 'returning home' is the same as not practicing the Way, or is one doing a ceaseless practice that is beyond 'returning home'? Why is returning home not practicing the Way? Is one hindered by not practicing or is one hindered by self? It is Nangaku's assertion that the old women in the neighborhood will call Baso by his former name. Why did Nangaku put this expression in his poem, and why did Baso accept these words of Dharma? Because when we go towards the south, the whole world likewise goes towards the south. It will also be the same with the rest of the directions. To doubt that this is so by using Mount Sumeru and the Great Ocean surrounding it as one's measure, or to gauge it by using the sun, moon, and stars as one's standard is, in either case, a small-minded view.

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The Thirty-second Ancestor, Meditation Master Daiman, was a native of Ōbai. Because he was born illegitimately, just like Lao-tzu was, he received his mother's surname of Shū. From the time that the Dharma was Transmitted to him at the age of seven until he was seventy-four years old, he preserved and kept to the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. He secretly bestowed Bodhidharma's kesa and Dharma on the monastery laborer Enō, which was an example of his extraordinary ceaseless practice. He did not let his chief disciple Jinshū know about the kesa and the Dharma, but bestowed them instead upon Enō, and, because of this, the life of the True Teaching has continued on without interruption.

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My former Master, the Reverend Monk Tendō, was a person from Yüeh or thereabouts. At nineteen, he gave up academic religious study to explore the Matter through training with his Master. He did not regress from that training even upon reaching his seventies. During the Chinese Chia-ting era, the emperor offered him a purple robe and the title of Meditation Master, but ultimately he turned them down, writing letters to the throne in which he declined the honors with thanks. Monks far and wide all greatly revered him, and the wise from near and far alike all treasured him. The emperor also took delight in him, sending him a gift of ceremonial tea. Those who found out about this spoke highly of it, as being something rare in any age. Indeed, this was due to true ceaseless practice on my Master's part, since craving fame is even worse than acting contrary to some Precept. Acting contrary to a Precept is a onetime wrong, whereas craving fame is a whole lifetime of trouble. Do not foolishly fail to forsake fame and do not blindly welcome it. Not welcoming it is ceaseless practice and forsaking it is ceaseless practice. Each of the first six generations of our Ancestral Masters had the title of Meditation Master bestowed upon them posthumously by an emperor, and this was because they did not crave fame while they were in the world. Thus, we too should quickly forsake any craving for fame within life and death, and aspire instead to the ceaseless practice of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

Do not be the equal of birds and beasts through indulging your greeds. To greedily look after the trivial self is what birds have in their thoughts, what animals have in their hearts. The forsaking of fame and gain is considered rare among both ordinary people and those in lofty positions, and no Ancestor of the Buddha has ever yet failed to forsake them. There are some people who say that it is for the benefit of sentient beings that they desire fame and crave gain, but this is a

monstrously false assertion. These people are non-Buddhists who have connected themselves with the Buddha Dharma; they are a bunch of demons who malign the True Teaching. If you were to claim something like this, would it mean that the Buddhas and Ancestors, who do not crave fame and gain, are therefore unable to benefit sentient beings? How laughable, how truly laughable that would be! And truly, there are others as well who are of benefit to living beings without being greedy. Further, those who have not yet learned that, although there are many ways to benefit beings, one should not label as benefiting beings that which is not of benefit to them, must surely be some species of demon. Living beings who would try to gain spiritual benefit from the likes of such demons will fall into all manner of hellish states. How pitiful to spend one's whole life like this! Do not call such silliness 'spiritually benefiting sentient beings'. So, even though the emperor's gift of the title of Meditation Master was graciously offered, letters were written to decline it with thanks, which is an excellent example from the past, and today's trainees would do well to explore this example with their Master.

To meet my former Master face-to-face was to encounter an ordinary human being. From the time my former Master left his hometown at the age of nineteen to seek out a spiritual teacher, he did his utmost to practice the Way, and when he had reached the age of sixty-five, he still had not regressed or turned aside from this practice. He was not on intimate terms with any emperor nor was he ever the guest of any emperor, and he was not on close terms with any minister of state or government official. Not only did he decline the purple kesa and the title of Meditation Master, but throughout his life he also did not wear a varicolored kesa, but customarily used a black kesa with a black formal robe, whether he was giving a talk in the Dharma Hall or letting trainees enter his private chambers for spiritual counseling.[68]

Once when he was giving spiritual instruction to his monks, he said the following:

> In practicing your meditation and studying what the Way is, having a heart for the Way is foremost, for this is the beginning of learning the Way. For about two hundred years now, the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors has been dying out, sad to say. What is more, skin bags who have been able to give expression to even a single line of Scripture have been few indeed. Formerly, when I had hung up my traveling staff at Mount Kinzan, Busshō Tokkō was the head of the temple at the time. Once while we were in the Meditation Hall for our

68. Black is the color that is customarily worn by novice monks.

> meal, he gave Teaching, saying, "In meditating on the Way of the Buddha Dharma, there is no need to seek out how others have put it into words: simply let each of you come to your own understanding of the Principle!" After having spoken like this, he made no effort at all to supervise what went on in the Monks' Hall. Both the junior and senior monks similarly did not supervise themselves and just busied themselves in meeting with official guests. Busshō did not particularly understand what the Buddha Dharma is getting at, and so he simply chased fame and craved gain. If each person is to come to his own understanding of what the Buddha Dharma is about, why, pray, did those in the past who probed into the Matter seek out a Master so that they might ask the way to go? The truth is that Busshō Tokkō never practiced meditation. Today, there are senior monks all over the place have no heart for the Way, for they are simply the offspring of those like Busshō Tokkō. How can the Buddha Dharma possibly flourish in their care? What a pity, what a pity!

When my Master talked in this way, even though many among those who were listening were direct descendants of Busshō, they did not resent what he said.

My Master also said once, "Practicing meditation is to let body and mind drop off. Without engaging in burning incense, making bows, reciting the name of Buddha, doing repentance, or doing walking meditation, we can realize It from the start just by sitting."

Truly, throughout Great Sung China today, there are not merely one or two hundred skin bags who call themselves both meditators and descendants of our tradition, these folks are as prevalent as rice and flax, bamboo and reeds. But I never got wind of anyone else who encouraged sitting simply for the sake of sitting. Between the four oceans of the world and the five lakes in China, only my late Master Tendō did this. Monks far and wide were alike in praising Tendō, yet Tendō did not praise all monks far and wide. Also, there were heads of large temples who did not know of Tendō at all. Even though they had been born in Great Sung China, perhaps they were some species of bird or beast. They did not explore what they should have explored, and, because of that, they were wasting their time to no avail. How sad that those folks who did not know Tendō have vociferously given forth barbarous teaching and confused talk, mistaking this for the family tradition of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

In giving informal talks, my former Master would customarily say, in effect:

> From the age of nineteen, I began to visit monasteries all over the place, yet I did not find anyone who taught for the sake of

> ordinary people. And from that time on, there has been no time—not even one day or one night—when I did not flatten my meditation cushion. Before I became head of a temple, I did not engage in chitchat with the locals, for time was dear to me. Even though there were places where I hung up my traveling staff, I never entered, or even saw, the interior of a hermit's hut or a private dormitory.[69] How much the less could I squander my efforts on wandering off to the mountains or playing about in lakes and streams? Apart from sitting in meditation in the Cloud Hall and in the public monastic areas, I would go alone, seeking out an upper floor in a tall building or a screened-off area where I could sit in meditation in a secluded place. I always carried a meditation mat rolled up in my sleeve, and sometimes I would sit in meditation even at the foot of a crag. I always felt that I would like to sit upon the Diamond Seat[70] until it split, for this was the outcome I was seeking. There were times when the flesh on my buttocks would blister and split open. At such times I all the more took delight in sitting in meditation. This year I am sixty-five, old in my bones and weak in the head. Though I no longer do my seated meditation along with the community, I have sympathy for my fellow monks, senior and junior, wherever they are. Accordingly, I am Abbot of this mountain monastery so that I may counsel those who come here and Transmit the Way to them for the sake of all beings. Otherwise, my old friends, where could the Buddha Dharma be found and what would It be like?

And this is how he would speak, both formally in the Dharma Hall as well as in his informal talks. Further, he would not accept any personal gifts that were offered to him by any of the monks who came from all directions to hear him speak.

Government Minister Chao was a descendant of the saintly sovereign of the Chia-ting era. As a senior official in the Mingchou district, he was in charge of both military and agricultural affairs. One day, he invited my late Master to come to his district office and give a Dharma talk, donating ten thousand silver pieces as an alms offering.

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69. That is, he slept, ate, and meditated in the Meditation Hall.

70. The Diamond Seat is the name given to the flat rock upon which Prince Siddhārtha sat until he realized Buddhahood.

After my Master had given the Dharma talk, he turned to the minister and said the following by way of thanks, "In accordance with established tradition, I have left my mountain monastery in order to ascend the Dharma Seat and give voice to the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana. I am respectfully doing this in memory of your relative, the late emperor, who is now in the realm of the departed. However, I dare not accept this silver. Monks in our family have no need of such things. So, with a thousand myriad thanks, I am humbly returning it to you exactly as I received it today, which is what we customarily do."

The minister said, "Venerable Monk, because this lowly official has been favored by being a relative of His Imperial Highness, wherever I go people honor me, and thus my treasures have grown in abundance. Today is the day for commemorating my former parent's happiness in the realm of the departed, so I wish to contribute something for his sake. Venerable Monk, why will you not accept it? Today has been one of great joy for me, so out of your great kindness and compassion, please retain this small alms offering."

My Master replied, "My dear minister, yours is a very sincere request, which I would usually not dare decline. But, simply, there is a reason why I am doing so. When I ascended the Dharma Seat and gave voice to the Teaching, were you able to hear It clearly?"

The minister said, "Just hearing it has filled me with immeasurable joy."

My Master then said, "My dear minister, you are very astute and have seen clearly what this monk's words were about. My awe is unceasing. Further, as to what you have hoped for, your late relative has been blessed ten thousandfold. Now, when this mountain monk ascended the Dharma Seat, what Dharma did he give expression to? Try and see if you can express It. If you can, I shall respectfully accept your ten thousand pieces of silver. If you are unable to express It, then let one of your emissaries retain the silver."

The minister arose and, facing my Master, said, "With due respect and careful consideration, I found your Dharma talk and your deportment, Venerable Monk, to be a ten thousandfold blessing."

My Master replied, "That is just the way I talk. What did you learn from listening to it?"

The minister was left speechless at this.

> After a while, my Master said, "The blessings for your departed one have been fully done. Let's wait a bit on the matter of deciding on an alms offering on his behalf."
>
> Having spoken thus, my Master was taking his leave when the minister said, "I bear no resentment that you have still not accepted the offering, and my delight is to have had the pleasure of meeting you." Having said this, he saw my Master off.

Many monks and laity, who had come from both east and west of the River Che, spoke highly of the event, and an attendant monk named Hei recorded of it in his diary, "This venerable old monk is a person not easily encountered. Where else could one possibly meet with such a person?"

Is there anyone who would not have accepted the ten thousand pieces of silver? A person of long ago said, "Look upon gold, silver, jewels, and jade as if they were dirt." Even if they do look like gold or silver to us, it is the custom for tatter-robed monks not to accept them. This was the way my Master would have it: it is not this way with others.

And my Master used to say, "For three hundred years, people have not had a spiritual friend like me, so you must all strive to do your utmost in pursuing the Way."

In my Master's assembly, there was a man from the Mienchou district in the western province of Szechwan, Dōshō by name, who was of the Taoist tradition. Together with five companions, he made a vow, saying, "In this lifetime, we shall master the Great Tao of the Buddhas and Ancestors or else we shall not return to our homeland." My Master was especially delighted by this and let them do walking meditation and train in the Way alongside his trainee monks. When arranging them by seniority, he placed them in a position behind his female monks; this was an excellent example that is rare in any generation. Also, there was a monk from the Fuchou district by the name of Zennyo, who made a vow, saying, "In this lifetime, I shall not take one step towards the South from whence I came, but shall train in the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors." There were so many within my Master's community who were like this; it is something that I saw with my very own eyes. Although behavior like this was not to be found in the communities of other Masters, it is, nevertheless, the ceaseless practice of monks in our tradition in Great Sung China. It is sad that this kind of constancy of heart has been absent among us Japanese. It is still absent, even at this time when we can encounter the Buddha Dharma; in former times when we could not have encountered It, the state of our bodies and minds would have been worse than disgraceful.

Calmly consider: a lifetime is not all that long. Even when the sayings of the Buddhas and Ancestors consisted of merely three words, or even just two words, what They gave expression to would have expressed what all the Buddhas and Ancestors truly are. And why so? Because the Bodies and Minds of Buddhas and Ancestors are one and the same, so Their one or two phrases all express the genial Body and Heart of a Buddha and Ancestor. This Body and Heart of Their's also comes to us, and It expresses our body and heart. At the very moment when They express It, Their expression comes to us and expresses our own body and heart. And this life of ours also expresses the embodiment of past lives. As a result, when we awaken and become a Buddha, and when we become an Ancestor by having a Dharma heir, we go beyond 'Buddha' and we go beyond 'Ancestor'. The ability of two or three words to embody our ceaseless practice is in no way different. Do not vainly chase after the sounds and forms of fame and gain. When you do not chase after them, then this is the very ceaseless practice that the Buddhas and Ancestors Transmit directly, one-to-one. Whether you seclude yourself within the world or seclude yourself apart from the world, whether you are wholly enlightened or half enlightened, what I recommend is that you cast aside the myriad things of the world and your myriad entanglements with them, for this is the ceaseless practice that Buddhas and Ancestors practice ceaselessly.

Written at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the fifth day of the fourth lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (May 6, 1242).

Copied by me on the eighteenth day of the first lunar month in the fourth year of the same era (February 8, 1243). Proofreading was completed on the eighth day of the third month of the same year (March 29, 1243).

Ejō

30

On 'The Meditative State That Bears the Seal of the Ocean'

(Kaiin Zammai)

Translator's Introduction: This is one of the most subtle discourses in the *Shōbōgenzō*, due in part to the influence of the *Avatamsaka Scripture* on Dōgen's way of expressing his points. It is primarily devoted to a line-by-line analysis of a poem attributed to Shakyamuni Buddha, which ends with the phrase *kaiin zammai,* 'the meditative state that bears the seal of the Ocean'. This term is traditionally applied to the meditative state that Shakyamuni Buddha is said to have entered in order to expound the *Avatamsaka Scripture* and, by extension, to the meditative state that all Buddhas and Ancestors enter when They give expression to the Dharma.

The term 'seal' is an allusion to a carved seal bearing its owner's name. It is used to authenticate a person's signature. For instance, when someone is Transmitted in the Zen tradition, the Transmission documents which the disciple writes on silk at that time are then 'signed and sealed' by the Master as proof of the authenticity of the Transmission. By extension, the meditative state referred to in this discourse is one that bears the seal of the Ocean, which means that what the meditator is giving expression to is genuine Dharma. In the context of this chapter, 'to seal' carries a meaning of 'to authenticate as genuine'.

All of the Buddhas and Ancestors invariably enter the meditative state that bears the seal of the Ocean. As They swim about in this meditative state, there are times when They give expression to the Truth, and times when They experience the Truth directly, and times when They put It into Their daily practice. The merit of Their doing Their practice upon the surface of the Ocean includes Their having penetrated to the very bottom of the Ocean. They make Their practice upon the surface of the Ocean Their practice that plumbs the depths of the Ocean. They are not concerned with wistfully seeking out ways to make Their wandering about through birth and death return Them to the Source. Instead, They have broken through former obstructions, as if They were passing through barrier gates or piercing through the joints in a cane of bamboo. This liberation is characteristic of each and every Buddha and Ancestor, for They are the various streams that have flowed into the meditative state that bears the seal of the Ocean.

The Buddha once said in verse:

Merely of various elements is this body of Mine composed.
The time of its arising is merely an arising of elements;
The time of its vanishing is merely a vanishing of elements.
As these elements arise, I do not speak of the arising of an 'I',
And as these elements vanish, I do not speak of the vanishing of an 'I'.
Previous instants and succeeding instants are not a series of instants that depend on each other;
Previous elements and succeeding elements are not a series of elements that stand against each other.
To give all of this a name, I call it 'the meditative state that bears the seal of the Ocean'.

We need to make a diligent effort to fully explore these words of the Buddha. Arriving at the Way and entering into the realization of the Truth do not necessarily depend on listening to someone else or on speaking with someone else. And we have heard of those whose knowledge is broad who have realized the Way upon hearing four lines of Scripture, and those who have knowledge as extensive as the sands of the Ganges have been known to realize the Truth through hearing a single line of a Scriptural verse. And what is more, the Buddha's present words are not about seeking one's inherent enlightenment in what lies ahead, nor are they about grasping after one's first awareness of enlightenment within some experience. In general, even though making one's inherent enlightenment manifest is the meritorious behavior of a Buddha or an Ancestor, the various kinds of enlightenment—such as the first inkling of enlightenment or the full experience of one's inherent enlightenment—are not the only things that make a Buddha or an Ancestor what They are.

Just as the Buddha said:

Merely of various elements is this body of Mine composed.

At this time, the Buddha was speaking from within the meditative state that bears the seal of the Ocean. From within this state, the various elements simply exist as they are, which He expressed as there 'merely being various elements'. He called this moment 'the composing of this body of Mine'. The integrated form which is

composed of the various elements He accordingly calls 'this body of Mine'. He did not consider this body of His as a single unified form, for it was composed of various elements. Thus, He spoke of this bodily composition as 'this body of Mine'.

The time of its arising is merely an arising of elements.

This arising of elements never leaves 'arising' behind.[1] For this reason, 'arising' is beyond what we can know through direct perception and beyond what we can know through intellectual discrimination. It is what He spoke of as, "I do not speak of the arising of an 'I.'" By His not speaking of an 'I' that arises, other people have learned not to engage in perceiving or differentiating about any arising of self within such elements, nor do they think about or discriminate between individual arisings. What is more, when there is transcendent 'mutual seeing', there will be a going beyond the realm of 'mutual seeing'.[2]

'Arising' invariably refers to the arrival of a specific moment, for time is what arises. Just what is this 'arising'? It must surely be arising in and of itself. This arising is already a moment in time. Never did He say that it fails to expose what Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow really are. Because this is the arising of 'being composed of', it is this body of His that arises, it is an 'I' that arises, and it is 'merely being various elements' that arises. It is not only hearing sounds and seeing forms and colors; it is also the arising of an 'I'. It is this arising of an 'I' that one does not speak about. 'Not speaking about something' does not mean 'not expressing something', for being able to express something is not the same as being able to put it in words. The time of arising is synonymous with the appearance of 'these elements'; it does not refer to the twenty-four hours of a day. These elements are what the time of arising is, and they do not compete with each other within the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form. As an Old Buddha once put it, "Suddenly, fire arises." Through this expression, He was saying that there is no waiting about for this arising.

Another Old Buddha once said, "What is this ceaseless time of arising and vanishing?"[3] Thus, in that this arising and vanishing is our experience of the

1. That is, the arising of elements is not a single event but something that keeps on occurring at each instant of now.

2. Transcendent mutual seeing refers to an understanding that goes beyond Master and disciple mutually recognizing each other as being 'such a one'.

3. Although, on a conventional level, this remark is a question, in the context of Chinese Zen Buddhism it would be understood as the assertion, "The What is this ceaseless time of arising and vanishing," the 'What' being used as an epithet for That Which goes beyond any name we can assign to It.

arising of an 'I' and our experience of the vanishing of an 'I', the process is unceasing. In entrusting the Matter* to Him, we need to discern the real meaning of His stating the ceaselessness of this process. We continually chop up this unceasing time of arising and vanishing, which is the very lifeblood of an Ancestor of the Buddha. In the unceasing time of arising and vanishing, who is it that arises and vanishes? As to the 'who' that arises and vanishes, it is the 'who' that is on the verge of being able to realize enlightenment within this body. That is, it is the 'who' that manifests this body, the 'who' for whom the Dharma is expressed, the very 'who' in the past who was unable to grasp what Mind is. It is "You have gotten what my Marrow is," and it is "You have gotten what my Bones are," because the 'you' is the who that arises and vanishes.

> *And as these elements vanish, I do not speak of the vanishing of an 'I'.*

The very moment when He does not speak of the vanishing of an 'I' will be the moment when those elements vanish. The vanishing is the vanishing of the elements. Though we speak of our own vanishing, it will actually be that of the elements. Because they are elements, they are beyond defilement, and because they are beyond defilement, they are untainted. To put it simply, untainted is what the Buddhas and the Ancestors are. And They say that you are just the same, for who is not a 'you'? All those for whom there existed a previous moment and for whom there exists a following moment will be a 'you'. And They say that 'I' is just the same and, since previous moments and following moments all constitute what an 'I' is, who is not an 'I'?

In that vanishing of the Buddha's, He was adorned with all manner of hands and eyes.[4] This was His great, unsurpassed nirvana, which is spoken of by some as His 'death', and which is described by others as His 'entering into extinction', and by others still as His'entering a place of abiding'. While the ever so many hands and eyes are spoken of in these ways, they are nothing other than the meritorious function of the Buddha's vanishing. He said that on the occasion of His 'I' vanishing, He did not speak about it, and on the occasion of His 'I' arising, again He did not speak about it. Yet even though these were simultaneous when He was alive, they may not have been simultaneous once He was dead.[5]

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* See *Glossary*.

4. 'Hands and eyes' is an allusion to the myriad ways in which Avalokiteshvara, who is the embodiment of the innate compassion of one's Buddha Nature, sees and offers aid to those who cry out for help.

5. In this context, 'alive' refers to the time when we believed in the delusion of a separate self,

This vanishing refers to the previous elements having already vanished, and it refers to the vanishing of future elements. It refers to the previous moments of the elements and it refers to the future moments of the elements. It refers to the previous and future elements, which are our thoughts and things in operation, and it refers to the previous and future moments, which are also our thoughts and things in operation.[6] Their 'not depending on each other' refers to our thoughts and things in operation and their 'not standing against each other' refers to the operating of our thoughts and things. Our letting them not stand against each other and our letting them not depend on each other is our realizing eighty or ninety percent of the Truth. When this vanishing turns the four elements* and the five skandhas* of our being into hands and eyes, there is our taking them up and there is our dedicating them.[7] When vanishing turns the four elements and the five skandhas into our course of action, then we step forward and both Master and disciple mutually recognize each other as being 'such a one'.* At just such a moment as this, even the statement "Our whole body is hands and eyes" is insufficient. Even "Our whole being, through and through, is hands and eyes" is insufficient. In sum, 'vanishing' is the meritorious activity of an Ancestor of the Buddha.

Now, as to the expressions 'not standing against each other' and 'not depending on each other', you need to realize that 'arising' encompasses 'arising in the beginning, middle, and end'. "Officially, there is not space enough for a needle, but privately, a horse and cart can pass through."[8] 'Arising in the beginning, middle, and end' is not something that depends on vanishing, nor is it something that stands against vanishing. It makes thoughts and things suddenly arise in places

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and 'dead' refers to the time when we have relinquished that self because we have realized our True Nature.

6. The phrase 'our thoughts and things' refers to whatever arises, persists for a while, disintegrates, and vanishes, be it the thoughts that we perceive as being within our mind or the things that we consider to occur in the physical world.

7. This sentence has a double meaning: First, by recognizing the impermanence of all thoughts and things, we dedicate our temporal being to expressing compassion. Second, by dropping off body and mind (the vanishing of a concern with self), all that remains is the dedication of oneself to expressing compassion for all beings. This double meaning of 'vanishing' as 'recognizing impermanence' and 'dropping off a concern with self' carries through the rest of this paragraph.

8. This saying by Meditation Master Sōzan Honjaku can be paraphrased as, "Officially, the Teaching is above any personal considerations, but on an individual level, It permits of broad provisional applications."

where they had previously vanished, but it is not the arising of what has vanished; it is simply the arising of thoughts and things. Because it is the arising of thoughts and things, it does not stand against anything or depend on anything. Further, one moment of vanishing and another moment of vanishing are not something mutually dependent, nor are they something mutually opposing. Even vanishing in beginning, middle, and end is simply vanishing. As a Master once remarked, "While we are encountering something, it does not stand out, but when our attention is drawn to it, then we recognize its existence." Vanishings occur suddenly in the place of previous arisings, but they are not vanishings of arising, they are vanishings of thoughts and things. Since they are vanishings of thoughts and things, they do not stand against each other, nor are they mutually dependent.

Whether vanishings are what constitutes 'all of this' or whether arisings are what constitutes 'all of this', the Buddha chose the phrase 'the meditative state that bears the seal of the Ocean' to give all these various things a name. It is not that training and enlightenment are not 'all of this', it is simply that He called this untainted state 'the meditative state that bears the seal of the Ocean'.

Meditative states are what manifest right before our eyes. They are our realization of the Way. They are the middle of the night when we grope behind us for our pillow. They are our groping behind us for our pillow on such a night.[9] And our groping about for our pillow is not something we do just for billions and billions of myriad eons: it is our being within the Ocean, constantly doing nothing other than giving expression to the Teaching on the Flowering of the Wondrous Dharma.[10] Because we do not speak of the arising of an 'I', we are within the Ocean. Its former surface, which is myriad ripples that follow from the slightest movement of a single wave, refers to our constantly giving expression to the Dharma. And Its later surface, which is a single wave that follows from the slightest movement of those myriad ripples, is the Teaching we give on the Flowering of the Wondrous Dharma. Even were we to reel up and cast out a thousand foot or ten thousand foot fishing line, such a line would, alas, just hang straight down.[11] 'The former surface' and 'the later surface' refer to that surface of the Ocean which we are on. It is as if we were to speak of the front of our head and the back of our head. What we call the front part of our head and the back part of

9. The meaning of this metaphor is explained in detail in Discourse 32: On Kannon, the Bodhisattva of Compassion *(Kannon)*.

10. 'The Teaching on the Flowering of the Wondrous Dharma' refers to our way of expressing the Dharma that the Buddha voiced in the *Lotus Scripture*.

11. In other words, the wondrous Dharma is like an ocean that is bottomless in its depth.

our head is adding a head upon a head.[12] It is not that there is a person inside, for the Ocean of one's being is not some abode of a worldly person nor is it some place beloved by a saintly person; it is one's Self alone within the Ocean of one's being. It is simply our constantly and openly giving expression to the Dharma. This 'within the Ocean' does not pertain to Its center, nor does it pertain to Its inside or outside; it is our constantly and endlessly dwelling within It as we give expression to the Teachings that are the Flowering of the Dharma. Though we do not take up residence in the east, west, south, or north, we do return, our boat empty yet fully illumined by the Moon's Light. This genuine refuge is our returning to our Original Nature. Who could say that this is our day-by-day conduct of 'staying in the water'? It is simply the Way of the Buddha manifesting in the Ultimate. We treat this as the seal that seals water. Put another way, it is the seal that seals limitless space. And put another way still, it is the seal that seals the mud. The seal that seals the water is not necessarily the seal that seals the Ocean, for above and beyond this there can be a seal that seals the Ocean. We call these the seal of the Ocean, and the seal of the water, and the seal of the mud, and the seal of the Mind. Having been directly Transmitted the seal of the Mind, we seal the water, and seal the mud, and seal the boundless space.

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Sōzan Honjaku was once asked by a monk, "I have heard that it says in the Scriptures that the great ocean does not give lodging to corpses. Just what kind of an ocean is this?"

The Master responded, "One that contains all that exists."

The monk then asked, "Then why doesn't it give lodging to corpses?"

The Master replied, "What has ceased to breathe is not connected with It."

The monk asked, "Given that it contains all that exists, why is something that has ceased to breathe not connected with it?"

The Master said, "The functioning of all that exists is something other than ceasing to breathe."

12. That is, just as one cannot separate the surface of the ocean from the rest of the ocean, so one cannot separate the front of the head from the back of the head, as if they were separable objects.

This Sōzan was a monastic brother to Ungo Dōyō. The fundamental thrust of Tōzan Ryōkai's teaching has found its true mark in this account.[13] Now the phrase, 'I have heard that it says in the Scriptures,' refers to the genuine Teaching of Buddhas and Ancestors. It is beyond the teachings of ordinary worldly people and of saintly ones. And it is beyond the teachings of the Lesser Course,* which are connected with the Buddha Dharma.

The Great Ocean does not give lodging to corpses.

'The Great Ocean' does not refer to the Innermost Sea or to the Outermost Sea, for instance, nor does It refer to the Eight Seas or any other similar ones.[14] This is not something for those of us who are studying the Way to have doubts about. And not only do we recognize as an Ocean that which is not an ocean, but we also recognize as an ocean that which is an ocean.[15] Even if you were to insist that the ocean in either case is what is being referred to, it still would not be the Great Ocean. The Great Ocean does not necessarily refer to the deep pools whose waters contain the eight virtues, nor does the Great Ocean necessarily refer to such things as the nine abysses of salt water.[16] Since Its various elements will enter into the composition of all of these, why must the Great Ocean always refer only to deep waters? This is what prompted the monk to ask, "Just what kind of an ocean is this?" And, since the Great Ocean was still unknown to ordinary people as well as to those in lofty positions, he spoke of It as 'the Great Ocean'. Someone who would ask such a question is one who would attempt to put into words his attachment to the word 'ocean'.[17]

As to Its not giving lodging to corpses, the phrase 'does not give lodging to' can mean "If you come with a clear head, you act with a clear head; if you come with a dull head, you act with a dull head." A corpse is dead ashes: its mind does

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13. Sōzan and Ungo were both Transmitted disciples of Tōzan. Sōzan's line died out shortly after his death, whereas Ungo's has continued up to the present day and is known as Sōtō Zen, the name referring to the teachings of Sōzan and Tōzan.

14. The Eight Seas, which include the Innermost Sea and the Outermost Sea, are associated with Mount Sumeru.

15. An Ocean that is not an ocean refers to a metaphoric ocean, whereas an ocean that is an ocean refers to ocean in an everyday, worldly sense.

16. The eight virtues of water are its being sweet, cold, soft, light, pure, odorless, not harmful to the throat, and not harmful to the stomach. 'The nine abysses' refers to nine vast underground rivers in China.

17. That is, the disciple is asking his question because he is not sure that he understands what Sōzan is talking about, but not because he doubts the validity of what Sōzan is saying.

not change no matter how many times it encounters the springtime. What he called 'a corpse' is something that no one has ever experienced, and that is why they do not comprehend what it is.

The Master's saying, "One that contains all that exists," expresses what the Ocean is. The point he is making is not that there is some single thing that contains all that exists, but rather that It is all contained things. And he is not saying that the Great Ocean is what contains all existing things, but rather that what is expressing 'all contained things' is simply the Great Ocean. Though we do not know what It is, It is everything that exists for the moment. Even coming face-to-face with a Buddha or an Ancestor is a mistaken perception of 'everything that exists for the moment'. At the moment of 'being contained', although it may involve a mountain, it is not just our 'standing atop a soaring mountain peak', and although it may involve water, it is not just our 'plunging down to the floor of the Ocean's abyss'.[18] Our acts of acceptance will be like this, as will our acts of letting go. What we call the Ocean of our Buddha Nature and what we call the Ocean of Vairochana* are simply synonymous with 'all that exists'.

Even though the surface of the Ocean may not be visible to us, we never doubt its existence in our daily conduct of 'swimming about'. For example, the monk Tafuku—one of Jōshū's Dharma heirs—once described a grove of bamboo as, "One or two canes are crooked, and three or four canes are aslant." Although his daily monastic conduct led him to see all that exists as a bunch of errors, why did he not say, "A thousand crooked canes! Nay, ten thousand crooked canes!" Why did he not say, "A thousand groves! Nay, ten thousand groves!" Do not lose sight of the underlying principle that is present like this in a grove of bamboo. Sōzan's expression, "One that contains all that exists," is synonymous with 'all that exists'.[19]

Although the monk's question, "Why is something that has ceased to breathe not connected with it?" might be viewed, albeit mistakenly, as arising from doubt, it could have been just what his mind was concerned with. When Master Rinzai said about Fuke, his elder brother in the Sangha, "I have long had my doubts about that fellow," he was simply recognizing who 'the person' was about whom he had

18. Dōgen borrows these two lines from a poem by Meditation Master Yakusan, which Dōgen had previously quoted at the beginning of Discourse 11: On 'Just for the Time Being, Just for a While, For the Whole of Time Is the Whole of Existence' (*Uji*). Here, he is expanding on what he said in that discourse.

19. That is, the It is not something separate from what It contains since both the contents and the container are identical with It.

long held doubts.[20] In what exists, why is something that has ceased to breathe not connected with It and how can It not give lodging to corpses? Herein, why something that has ceased to breathe is not connected with It is that It already contains all that exists. Keep in mind that 'containing' does not mean 'keeping' and that 'containing' is synonymous with 'not giving lodging to'. Even if all that exists were a corpse, it might well be that not giving lodging to it would forthwith span ten thousand years, and it might well be that 'not belonging to It' is this old monk Dōgen playing one stone in a game of *Go*.

What Sōzan said is, "The functioning of all that exists is something other than ceasing to breathe." In other words, whether all that exists ceases to breathe or does not stop breathing, a corpse would still be unconnected with It. Even though a corpse is a corpse, if it had behavior that was in harmony with all that exists, it would contain all—it would be containment. The journey before us and the journey behind us, which is part and parcel of all that exists, each have their own functions, and ceasing to breathe is not one of them. In other words, it is like the blind leading the blind. The fundamental principle of the blind leading the blind includes 'one blind person leading one blind person' and 'a mass of blind people leading a mass of blind people'. When a mass of blind people are leading a mass of blind people, all contained things contain all contained things. Further, no matter how many Great Ways there are, They are beyond 'all that exists', for we have still not fully manifested our meditative practice, which is the meditative state that bears the seal of the Ocean.

Written at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the twentieth day of summer in the third year of the Ninji era (May 21, 1242).

Copied by me during the first year of the Kangen era (1243).

Ejō

20. Rinzai's remark was not derogatory, but was a common way among Zen monks of acknowledging that someone—in this case, Fuke—was 'such a person'.

31

On Predicting Buddhahood

(Juki)

Translator's Introduction: This discourse is based on the prediction by Shakyamuni Buddha that all sentient beings will ultimately realize Buddhahood. In Japanese, this prediction is called *juki*, a technical term that needs to be translated in slightly different ways depending on context. These can include the principle of predicting Buddhahood, the conferring of a prediction of Buddhahood, and affirming someone's realization of Buddhahood, among others. Towards the end of the discourse, Dōgen writes the word *juki* using a different character for *ju,* which conveys the meaning of receiving, accepting, or acknowledging the prediction.

The Great Teaching which Ancestors of the Buddha have Transmitted one-to-one is the prediction of Buddhahood. Those who have not trained with an Ancestor of the Buddha have never encountered this Teaching even in their dreams. The timing of this prediction varies. It is predicted even for persons who have not yet given rise to the Mind of Wisdom, and it is predicted for those who are not yet aware of their Buddha Nature, and it is predicted for those who are aware of their Buddha Nature, and it is predicted for those who have a sense of a personal self, and it is predicted for those who are beyond a sense of a personal self, and it is predicted for all Buddhas. All Buddhas preserve and rely on the predictions of Buddhas. In your training, you should not think that after you have had the prediction conferred on you, you will become a Buddha, nor should you think that after you have become a Buddha, you will receive some affirmation of it. At the time when the prediction is conferred there is one's becoming Buddha, and, at that same time, there is also one's continued training and practice. There is the affirmation of Buddhahood that resides within all Buddhas, and there is the affirmation that is above and beyond Buddhahood. This affirmation is given to oneself, and it is given to one's body and mind. If one then gives up on continuing to learn about 'the Great Matter* of the affirmation of Buddhahood', then one is giving up on learning through practice, and thereby sets aside 'the Great Matter of the Way of the Buddha'. The prediction of Buddhahood is present before one has a body, and the prediction of Buddhahood is present after one has a body. There is the prediction of Buddhahood that we can recognize, and there is the prediction of

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* See *Glossary.*

Buddhahood that we do not recognize. There is the prediction of Buddhahood that others become aware of, and there is the prediction of Buddhahood that others do not become aware of.

By all means, you need to realize that when you affirm your prediction of Buddhahood, your true Self will manifest before your very eyes, for affirming the prediction of Buddhahood is synonymous with the manifesting of your true Self. Therefore, what Buddha after Buddha, Ancestor after Ancestor, and Successor after Successor have inherited is just this prediction of Buddhahood. And further, there is not a single thought or thing that is excluded from this prediction. So how could the great earth with its mountains and rivers, along with Mount Sumeru and its vast oceans, possibly be exceptions? There is not the least person, be it Mr. Chang's third son or Mr. Li's fourth son, who is beyond it.[1] The prediction of Buddhahood that we thoroughly explore in this way is something that we can express in one phrase, that we can hear in one phrase, that we may misunderstand in one phrase, and that we may comprehend in one phrase. It is our doing our practice in all earnestness and our giving expression to the Dharma in all sincerity. It is what instructs us to step back and what instructs us to step forward.[2] Our being able to sit here today whilst wearing the kesa* could not have come about had we not been able to receive the prediction that has come to us from the distant past. Because we have put our hands in gasshō* and placed the kesa upon our heads, what has manifested before us is the prediction of our Buddhahood.

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The Buddha once said:

> Although there are many forms for affirming Buddhahood, to summarize them briefly, there are eight:
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> First, you recognize it yourself, but others do not recognize it,
> Second, everyone else recognizes it, but you do not,
> Third, both you and everyone else recognize it,

1. Chang and Li are common Chinese family names and, much like the western names Smith and Jones, are used to refer to anybody in general. Third and fourth sons also represent individuals who are not apt to hold a position of importance within a family. Hence, the allusion is to 'anybody and everybody'.

2. In Zen parlance, 'stepping back' is associated with sitting in meditation and reflecting on one's True Nature, whereas 'stepping forward' is associated with going forth and doing one's daily deeds from the mind of meditation.

Fourth, neither you nor anyone else recognize it,
Fifth, those close to you perceive it, but those distant from you do not,
Sixth, those distant from you perceive it, but those close to you do not,
Seventh, both those close to you and distant from you perceive it,
Eighth, neither those close to you nor distant from you perceive it.

The affirmation of one's Buddhahood is just like this. So, do not occupy yourself with thoughts that your Buddhahood cannot be affirmed because it has not been recognized or appreciated by the living spirit within that smelly skin bag* of yours. And do not say that the prediction of Buddhahood cannot be readily given even to those humans who have not yet awakened. In ordinary, worldly ways of thinking, people have customarily been taught that they will receive this prediction when they have completely fulfilled their training and practice, for that is what is critical to their becoming a Buddha, but in the Way of the Buddha this is not what is taught. When someone gives heed to a single phrase whilst following a good spiritual friend or gives heed to a single phrase whilst following some Scriptural work, this will be the cause for their receiving a prediction of Buddhahood, because this is the fundamental practice of all the Buddhas, and it is the practice that puts down good roots amidst all the hundreds of things that sprout up in one's life. If I were to express in words what the prediction of Buddhahood is, I would say that all who receive the prediction are persons who will indeed realize the Ultimate.

Keep in mind that even a single mote of dust is unsurpassed, that even a single mote of dust is transcendent. Why would the prediction of Buddhahood not include a single mote of dust? Why would the prediction of Buddhahood not include each thought and thing? Why would the prediction of Buddhahood not include all the myriad thoughts and things that arise? Why would the prediction of Buddhahood not include training and enlightenment? Why would the prediction of Buddhahood not include the Buddhas and the Ancestors? Why would the prediction of Buddhahood not include one's doing one's utmost in practicing the Way? Why would the prediction of Buddhahood not include great realization and great delusion? It is just as Meditation Master Ōbaku said to his disciple Rinzai, "When my tradition comes down to you, it will greatly flourish in the world." And it is just as Meditation Master Enō said to his disciple Nangaku, "You too are like this, and I too am like this." The prediction of Buddhahood is a mark of the Dharma. The prediction of Buddhahood is "How could it be otherwise?" The

prediction of Buddhahood is a face breaking out in a smile. The prediction of Buddhahood is birth and death: it is coming and going. The prediction of Buddhahood is the whole universe in all its ten quarters. The prediction of Buddhahood is the whole universe's never having been hidden from us.

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> Gensha Shibi was once walking in attendance with his Master Seppō, when Seppō pointed to the ground right before them and said, "This plot of land would be a fine place to erect a seamless stupa for me."
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> Shibi asked him, "And how high would it be?"
>
> Thereupon, Seppō looked up and down as though measuring it.
>
> Shibi then said, "There will certainly be great good fortune for all ordinary humans, as well as for those in lofty positions, from such a stupa. And yet, my venerable monk, it is as if you have not encountered the prediction of Buddhahood on Vulture Peak even in your dreams."
>
> Seppō responded, "Well, how would you put it?"
>
> Shibi replied, "Seven feet or eight feet."[3]

Now, in Shibi's saying, "And, my venerable monk, it would seem that you have not yet encountered the prediction of Buddhahood on Vulture Peak even in your dreams," he was not saying that the prediction of Buddhahood on Vulture Peak did not exist for Seppō, nor was he saying that Seppō had received the prediction of Buddhahood on Vulture Peak. He was saying that it seemed as if the venerable monk had never encountered the prediction of Buddhahood on Vulture Peak even in his dreams.[4]

We need to use our Eye to see the prediction of Buddhahood on Vulture Peak from a higher perspective. Shakyamuni Buddha put it in words as, "I have the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, which is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, and I am entrusting It to Makakashō." Keep in mind that, in harmony with the time, when Seigen gave the prediction of Buddhahood to his disciple Sekitō, Makakashō was likewise receiving Seigen's prediction of Buddhahood, and Seigen was also conferring Shakyamuni's prediction of Buddhahood. Thus, it is

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3. A seamless stupa is a funeral monument carved out of solid rock that serves as a repository for someone's remains. When it contains the remains of a Master, it is considered to be the body of a seated Buddha six feet tall. Shibi's saying "Seven feet or eight feet" was a statement that expressed deep love and respect for his Master.

4. By this statement, Shibi was affirming the 'no self' of his Master.

clear that Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor have had entrusted to Them the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. Accordingly, Daikan Enō, the Sixth Chinese Ancestor of Mount Sōkei, had already conferred the prediction on Seigen. Once he had received the prediction from the Sixth Ancestor, Seigen became the real Seigen who preserved and relied upon the prediction of his Buddhahood. At this time, what all the Ancestors up to the Sixth Ancestor had learned by exploring the Matter through their training was being put into practice through affirming the prediction of Seigen's Buddhahood. This has been described as:

Clear and bright are the tips of all the things
that sprout up;
Clear and bright are the true intentions of the
Buddhas and Ancestors.

Since this is so, how can the Buddhas and the Ancestors not include 'all the things that sprout up'? How can all the things that sprout up not include 'me' and 'you'? Do not be foolish and think that you can see or recognize all the thoughts and things with which you are personally endowed. This is not the way things are. The thoughts and things that we recognize are not necessarily our own possessions. What we possess is not necessarily something that we ourselves see or are aware of. So, do not be skeptical, thinking that since the prediction is beyond anything we now know, or see, or think about, we are not in possession of it. What is more, what we call the prediction of Buddhahood on Vulture Peak is Shakyamuni Buddha's predicting of Buddhahood: it was given from Shakyamuni Buddha to Shakyamuni Buddha. While it would be reasonable not to give the prediction to someone whom you are not yet sure of, the underlying meaning is that there is no obstacle to affirming the prediction of Buddhahood for someone who has already received that prediction. Even where there has not been an affirmation of Buddhahood, it is not superfluous to predict someone's Buddhahood. There is nothing lacking nor is there anything superfluous: this is the principle of predicting Buddhahood that all Ancestors of the Buddha have given to all Ancestors of the Buddha. This is why the Old Buddha Unchō Tokufū said:

From past to present, Masters have raised their hossu to*
point the Matter out,
Great their wish, deep and subtle, and not, I dare say,
easy to explore.
Were it not for this Truth which Masters have given
through their Teaching,
From what perspective, pray, could we talk about It?

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Now, to thoroughly explore Shibi's point, in his reckoning how high a stupa made from solid rock is, he used the expression "How high?" Thus, it is not that Shibi is dissatisfied with Seppō's looking up and down. It is simply that—thanks to Seppō—even though there will certainly be great good fortune for all ordinary humans, as well as those in lofty positions, nevertheless, Seppō's way of looking at the stupa is not what Shakyamuni Buddha's prediction of Buddhahood is about. That which gains Shakyamuni Buddha's prediction of Buddhahood exists in the expression 'seven feet or eight feet'. In our looking closely at Shakyamuni's real prediction of Buddhahood, we need to examine it by means of the expression 'seven feet or eight feet'. So, setting aside for the moment whether the expression 'seven feet or eight feet' is on target or not, the prediction of Buddhahood must unquestionably encompass the prediction of Seppō's Buddhahood as well as the prediction of Shibi's Buddhahood. Further, one should express the height of a stupa by proffering the prediction of Buddhahood. Should anyone proffer something other than the prediction of Buddhahood, it will not be an expression that conveys the Buddha Dharma.

Whenever we recognize, hear, or state that the Self is truly our self, then, beyond doubt, the prediction of Buddhahood will fully manifest our spiritual question. When we are face-to-face with the prediction of our Buddhahood, we will immediately do our utmost in practice, for this is in harmony with the prediction of Buddhahood. In order to ultimately realize the prediction of Buddhahood, just as ever so many Ancestors of the Buddha have done, one trains in order to manifest one's genuine enlightenment. And utilizing one's strength in the effort to affirm one's Buddhahood brings forth the Buddhas en masse. This is why Shakyamuni Buddha said in the *Lotus Scripture,* "Only because of Their relationship to the One Great Matter do Buddhas appear in the world." This means that, on a higher level, it is the transcendent Self, which goes beyond one's personal self, that receives the prediction of the transcendent Self's Buddhahood. This is why Buddhas receive the affirmation of Buddhas.

Generally speaking, when it comes to giving the prediction, there are those who predict it by raising one hand, and those who predict it by raising two hands, and those who predict it by raising a thousand hands and eyes, and those who are given the prediction. On one occasion it was predicted by the raising of an udumbara blossom, and on another occasion Shakyamuni predicted it for Makakashō by holding aloft a gold brocade kesa, but neither of these ways is a required way of doing it. There are various ways of conferring the prediction. There can be a prediction of one's Buddhahood from within, and there can be a

prediction of one's Buddhahood from without. The principle of thoroughly exploring 'within and without' will be found by exploring the affirmation of Buddhahood through your training with your Master. To learn the Way as an affirmation of Buddhahood is equivalent to a single iron rod extending for ten thousand miles. To sit with the stillness of a mountain as an affirmation of Buddhahood is a single instant being equivalent to ten thousand years.

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Our Old Buddha Shakyamuni once said in verse:

> *One after another, They were able to realize Buddhahood*
> *And, turning to the next, They were able to confer the prediction of Buddhahood.*[5]

The realization of Buddhahood spoken of here undoubtedly implies 'one after another', and 'one after another' refers to realizing Buddhahood bit by bit. There is a 'turning to the next' in the predicting of Buddhahood. 'Turning to the next' is a turning that begets a turning, and 'turning to the next' is a next that begets a next. It is, for instance, creating a next, and creating a next involves performing an action. That action is beyond the deliberate, calculated creation of a self, beyond the deliberate, calculated creation of circumstances, beyond any measured concoction, and beyond any deliberately created state of mind. By relying on the principle of 'turning to the next', you should, by all means, thoroughly investigate both your creating circumstances and your not creating circumstances. And by relying on the principle of 'turning to the next', you should thoroughly investigate both what you are concocting and what you are not concocting.

Now, the emerging of Buddhas and Ancestors is due to Each having been turned to through performing some action. The coming from the West of the five Buddhas and the six Ancestors was due to Each having been turned to through performing some action.[6] And what is more, the toting of water and the carrying of

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5. A verse based on a passage in the *Lotus Scripture*, which speaks of a Transmission line that will pass through five hundred monks. 'The next' refers to one's disciple, that is, someone who is next in the line of succession.

6. The five Buddhas are the Five Dhyāni Buddhas of esoteric Buddhism, each of whom represents a particular aspect of the Cosmic Buddha. These Buddhas are: Vairochana, the Eternal Buddha; Akshobya, the Immovable Buddha; Ratnasambhava, the Jewel-Born Buddha; Amitabha, the Buddha of Immeasurable Light; and Amoghasiddhi, the Fearless Buddha. The six Ancestors is an allusion to Bodhidharma as the First Chinese Ancestor through Daikan Enō who was the Sixth.

firewood has continued on by a turning to the next. To live your life as "One's very mind is Buddha" is a turning towards the next. When you enter nirvana as "One's very mind is Buddha"—and entering once or twice is nothing extraordinary—you will pass through ever so many nirvanas, and will realize ever so many realizations of the Truth, and will manifest as signs and marks ever so many signs and marks.[7] This is nothing other than realizing Buddhahood by one after another, and entering nirvana by one after another, and predicting Buddhahood for one after another, and one after another realizing what 'turning to the next' is. Turning to the next is not something that is inherent, but is simply something that is all-pervasive, penetrating all. Now, Buddhas and Ancestors mutually recognize each other, face-to-face, and this face-to-face mutual recognition is what is meant by 'one after another'. There is no room in which to turn away from or evade turning to the next in the giving of the prediction by a Buddha or in the giving of the prediction by an Ancestor.

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It was an Old Buddha who said:[8]

Now that I have heard from the Buddha
That we have received His glorious prediction of our Buddhahood
And that through His turning to the next, we have had His assurance conferred upon us,
My body and mind are filled with joy.

This is saying that the glorious matter of Shakyamuni Buddha's prediction is, beyond question, what Kaundinya heard from the Buddha. What has filled his body and mind with joy is that he has also received an assurance, which he has just now heard from the Buddha through His turning to the next. The next that is turned to will be the 'I now' who hears and the assurance will not be limited to some 'self' or 'other' of past, present, or future. It will be heard of from the Buddha and not from someone else. This lies beyond delusion and enlightenment, beyond sentient beings, and beyond earthly realms with their grasses and trees, for it will be what one hears from the Buddha. It is the glorious matter of His predicting our

7. 'Signs and marks' is an allusion to the thirty-three signs and eighty distinguishing marks of a Buddha.

8. The Old Buddha is Ajnyata Kaundinya, one of the five ascetics who associated with Shakyamuni before His enlightenment. As recorded in the *Lotus Sutra,* Kaundinya was the first of five hundred to receive this prediction after the Buddhas enlightenment.

Buddhahood, and it is our receiving His assurance through His turning to us as 'the next'. The principle of 'turning to the next' never gets stuck in some cranny even for a moment but, bit by bit, fills the body and mind with joy. The joyous assertion that is extended through this turning to the next is undoubtedly in harmony with the body, which is seeking far and wide for the Master, and it is also in harmony with the mind, which is seeking far and wide for the Master. Further, because the body, beyond question, thoroughly permeates the mind, and the mind, beyond question, thoroughly permeates the body, Kaundinya spoke of his body and mind being filled. In other words, it is what permeates all worlds and all directions; it permeates the body and permeates the mind. This, then, is a particularly great joy. This joy clearly gladdens us, whether we are asleep or awake, deluded or enlightened. Even so, although the states of being asleep, awake, deluded, or enlightened are intimately connected with each other, they do not stain or defile each other. This is the glorious matter of predicting our Buddhahood, which is our being turned to and receiving the affirmation.

> Shakyamuni Buddha, through speaking to Bhaisajyaguru, the Bodhisattva* Lord of Healing, addressed eighty-thousand other bodhisattvas, saying, "O Lord of Healing, within this great assembly of countless heavenly beings, dragon kings, yakshas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kinnaras, and mahoragas[9]—both human and nonhuman—as well as male and female monastics, and male and female laity, you can see those who are seeking to be shravakas,* those who are seeking to be pratyekabuddhas,* and those who are seeking the Bodhisattva Way to Buddhahood. If such as these, who are all standing before the Buddha now, should hear but a single verse or line from My Teaching, which is the flowering of the Wondrous Dharma, and take joy in It for even a moment, I will give them all a prediction of their Buddhahood. Beyond question, all will realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment."

9. 'Dragon kings…mahoragas' comprise a list of quasi-mythical beings who were originally given to violent or seductive acts but who, upon conversion to Buddhism, became spiritual guardians, each type having governance over some protective function. Hence, they may manifest as some human or non-human being fulfilling that function. Together with the heavenly beings, they are known as the eight categories of non-human beings.

So, within this assembly of countless beings, even though the wishes and levels of understanding of these countless heavenly beings and dragon kings, of those in the four categories of Buddhists, and of those in the eight categories of nonhumans may differ, who would have them hear one line or verse which would not be the Wondrous Dharma? How could any of you take joy in non-Buddhist teachings even for a moment? His phrase 'such as these' means those who are the flowers of the Dharma. His phrase 'who are all standing before the Buddha' means all who are within Buddha. Even though humans and nonhumans may hold mixed beliefs concerning the myriad thoughts and things that arise, and even though there are those who have sown karmic* seeds for hundreds of later sproutings, they will still be included in 'such as these'. 'Such as these' means 'all those to whom I have given a prediction of Buddhahood'. 'All those to whom I have given a prediction of Buddhahood' is correct from head to tail. Accordingly, it is the proper functioning of supreme, fully perfected enlightenment.

> Shakyamuni Buddha, in addressing the Lord of Healing, also said, "Further, after the Tathagata's extinction, if there is someone who hears a single verse or line of My Teaching, which is the flowering of the Wondrous Dharma, and that one were to rejoice in It even for a moment, I would predict supreme, fully perfected enlightenment for such a one as well."

What would be the time span implied by the phrase 'after the Tathagata's extinction' that was just spoken of? Would it be within the forty-nine years after His enlightenment or would it be within the eighty years of His whole life span? Let's say for the moment that it is the eighty-year span. When the Buddha said, "If there is someone who hears a single verse or line of My Teaching, which is the flowering of the Wondrous Dharma, and that one were to rejoice in It even for a moment," was he referring only to what is heard by those who are keen-witted and not to what is heard by those who are dull-witted? And does it matter if they hear it correctly or not? If we express this Teaching for the sake of others, it should be expressed as, "If there are any people by whom It is heard," and so on. And do not treat them as being either keen-witted or dull-witted. What you should say is, "Although that which hears His Teaching, which is the flowering of the Dharma, is the profound and immeasurable wisdom of Buddhas, when some hear It, It is invariably experienced as one phrase, and when others hear It, It is invariably experienced as one verse, and when still others hear It, It is invariably experienced as one moment of joyousness." Such a moment will be Shakyamuni Buddha's once again giving His prediction of their realizing supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. There is His giving His prediction one more time and there is His

giving His prediction to all. Do not entrust some stumble-footed, worldly, third son of Chang with the task of spiritual prediction. Experience it through painstaking effort that is in harmony with your training. Then you will be 'someone who hearkens with joy to a single line or verse'. There is no time to waste by treating Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow as if one were sticking a head upon one's own head. His witnessing someone's being given the prediction of supreme, fully perfected enlightenment is the Buddha's wish being fulfilled. And it will be the same for all us skin bags. Through this prediction, the hopes of the multitudes are fulfilled. And it would be like this if anyone hears it.

Buddhahood has been affirmed by holding aloft a pine branch, by holding aloft an udumbara blossom, by holding aloft twinkling eyes, and by a face breaking into a smile. And there is the example from the past of its having been affirmed by passing on a pair of sandals. These are some examples of this Dharma's being something that speculative and discriminatory thinking are unable to fathom. There is the affirmation of "I myself am also like this," and there is the affirmation of, "You yourself are also like this." This principle can be stated as, "One can give the prediction of Buddhahood in the past, present, and future." Because past, present, and future are encompassed within the prediction of Buddhahood, Buddhahood is realized in the prediction of one's own Buddhahood and it is realized in the prediction of the Buddhahood of others.

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> Vimalakirti,* in talking with Maitreya,* said, "O Maitreya, it is said that the World-honored One has given you the prediction that in some lifetime you would realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. In which lifetime are you able to receive His prediction? Is it in the past, or in the present, or in the future? If you say it was in a past lifetime, such a past life has already gone. If you say it will be in some future life, such a future life has yet to come. If you say that it is in your present lifetime, there is no present lifetime that abides. If it is as the Buddha teaches, then you, dear monk, at this very moment, are living and aging and perishing. If you are able to receive His prediction on account of your no longer being alive, then no longer being alive would be the right state to be in.[10] But, then again, within such a 'right state', one cannot receive a prediction and one cannot realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. So how,

10. This refers to the intermediate stage between death and rebirth.

> Maitreya, will you receive the prediction in any lifetime? Will you do it by being able to receive the prediction in life just as it is? Or will you do it by being able to receive the prediction in death just as it is? If you say you can get the prediction by means of life just as it is, there is no such thing as 'life just as it is'. If you say you can get the prediction by means of death just as it is, there is no such thing as 'death just as it is'. All sentient beings are like this, and all thoughts and things are also like this. The wise and holy among the multitudes are also like this. And you, Maitreya, are also just like this. If you, Maitreya, are able to receive the prediction, then all sentient beings should also be able to receive the prediction. And why is that? Well, because 'That Which Is as It Is' is free of duality and free of any differentiations. If you, Maitreya, can realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, all sentient beings can likewise realize it. And why is that? Because all sentient beings are already manifestations of enlightenment."

What Vimalakirti is saying here is not something that the Tathagata has said is not so. While this is true, Maitreya's being able to receive the prediction was already a settled matter. Therefore, the ability of all sentient beings to receive the prediction must likewise be a settled matter. If there is no affirmation for sentient beings, there cannot be any affirmation for Maitreya, because all sentient beings are manifestations of enlightenment. It is enlightenment that receives the prediction of enlightenment. Receiving the prediction is our life this very day. Thus, because all sentient beings have given rise to the same intention to realize Buddhahood, their receiving the prediction will be the same and their realizing the Way will be the same.

Even so, Vimalakirti, by your assertion, "Within this 'right state', one cannot receive a prediction," you seem not to know that the 'right state' is simply one's receiving the prediction, and you do not seem to be saying, "The 'right state' is precisely what enlightenment is." Further, you said, for example, that one's life in the past has already gone, one's life in the future has not yet come, and one's life in the present does not abide. But the past is not necessarily something that has gone, the future is not necessarily something that has not yet come, and the present is not necessarily something that is not abiding. Although you may say that you are studying such notions as 'already gone', 'not yet come', and 'not abiding,' in terms of past, future, and present, by all means you need to state the principle that what has not yet come is past, present, and future. When we recognize this, then we will understand the principle that our arising and our perishing both realize the prediction, and we will understand the principle that our arising and our perishing

both realize enlightenment. When all sentient beings realize the prediction of their Buddhahood, Maitreya, too, realizes his prediction.

Now, O Vimalakirti, I would like to ask you, "Is Maitreya the same as any sentient being or is he different?" Try to say, and we'll see! You have already said that if Maitreya obtains the prediction, all sentient beings will also obtain the prediction. If you are saying that Maitreya is other than a sentient being, then sentient beings cannot be sentient beings and Maitreya, likewise, cannot be Maitreya. But that won't do, for at this very moment, you too could not be Vimalakirti! If you were not Vimalakirti, then this expression of yours would be useless. So, we can say that when the prediction of Buddhahood causes the lives of all sentient beings to exist, there are the lives of all sentient beings and there is Maitreya. The prediction of Buddhahood can cause everything to exist.

Written in the summer of the third year of the Ninji era, on the twenty-fifth day of the fourth lunar month (May 26, 1242) at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple.

Copied by me on the twentieth day of the first lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (February 29, 1244) while I was residing in the quarters of the Abbot's assistant at Kippō-ji Temple in Etchū Province.

32

On Kannon, the Bodhisattva of Compassion

(Kannon)

Translator's Introduction: The name Kannon is a shortened version of Kanzeon (Skt. Avalokiteshvara), 'The One Who Heeds the Cries of the World'. This Bodhisattva goes under many names and has taken many forms in India, as well as in other East Asian Buddhist cultures. Originally, Avalokiteshvara was iconographically represented as being male, but after the figure came into China, it was often pictured as being female, although not exclusively so. From the standpoint of Buddhist iconography, the male aspect represents the personification of compassion, whereas the female aspect represents compassion in action. However, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are said to have the ability to shift between these two functions, depending on which seems to be the more spiritually helpful in a given situation. For a translator writing in English, this presents a problem of how to refer to Kannon: as He or as She. Since a choice has to be made, I have chosen to use masculine grammatical forms simply because, historically, this Bodhisattva is Indian in origin, where the figure is traditionally considered to be male and the name is grammatically masculine in gender.

The compassion that is represented by Kannon has no limitations in its functioning, as the dialogue between the two brother-monks, Ungan and Dōgo, expresses. It is like eyes that see everything and hands that offer help everywhere, even in the darkest of times. Some readers may find it difficult, on occasion, to follow what Dōgen is driving at in this discourse. To put it simply, when it comes to conveying what the innate compassion of one's Buddha Nature is, it is difficult to express what is essentially beyond words to convey, and conventional ways of talking about the innate compassion of one's Buddha Nature do not meet the mark. Therefore, even though Ungan and Dōgo successfully found a way of expressing what the compassion of Buddha Nature is like, the way that they put the matter goes beyond conventional ways of understanding what is said. At times Dōgen explains what they mean by using the *via positiva* (saying what something is like) and at other times he does this by using the *via negativa* (saying what something is not like).

Ungan Donjō once asked Dōgo Enchi,[1] "What use does the Bodhisattva* of Great Compassion make of His ever so many hands and eyes?"

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1. Ungan and Dōgo were both Dharma heirs of Yakusan Igen.

* See *Glossary.*

Dōgo replied, "He is like someone in the night who reaches behind himself, his hand groping for his pillow."

Ungan remarked, "I get it, I get it!"

Dōgo asked, "What did you get?"

Ungan said, "That His whole body is hands and eyes."

Dōgo replied, "What you have said is very well put. Still, it only expresses eighty or ninety percent of the Matter."*

Ungan responded, "Well, so much for the likes of me. How about you, my elder brother in the Dharma, what do you make of it?"

Dōgo replied, "That His whole being, through and through, is hands and eyes."

In expressing what Kannon is, many voices have been heard before and after this incident, but none of them equal the words of Ungan and Dōgo. If you wish to explore through your training what Kannon is, you should thoroughly investigate what Ungan and Dōgo are saying here. The Bodhisattva of Great Compassion spoken of here is Kanzeon Bosatsu, 'The Bodhisattva Who Heeds the Cries of the World', who is also known as Kanjizai Bosatsu, 'The Bodhisattva Who Observes All Things Free of Attachments'. Through our training, we study Him, or Her, as the father and mother of all Buddhas. So do not consider Him to be inferior to the Buddhas, thinking that He has not yet realized the Truth, for in the past He was the Tathagata known as 'The Clarifier of the True Dharma'.

So, let us now take up, and thoroughly explore, the words spoken by Ungan, namely, "What use does the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion make of His ever so many hands and eyes?" There are Buddhist traditions that make a point of honoring Kannon, and there are Buddhist traditions that have not yet seen Kannon even in their dreams. The Kannon that existed for Ungan was in complete harmony with Dōgo's Kannon. And this was not so just for one or two Kannons, but Ungan was likewise in harmony with hundreds of thousands of myriad Kannons. Only Ungan's assembly allowed Kannon to truly be Kannon. And why is that? The difference between the Kannon of which Ungan spoke and the Kannon of which other Buddhas spoke is like the difference between being able to put It in words and not being able to put It in words. The Kannon of some Buddhas merely had twelve faces; this was not so for Ungan. The Kannon of some other Buddhas merely had a thousand hands and eyes; this was not so for Ungan. The Kannon of still other Buddhas had eighty-four thousand hands and eyes; this was not so for Ungan. How do I know this to be true? Because when Ungan speaks of the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion using His ever so many hands and eyes, his phrase 'ever so many' does not mean merely eighty-four thousand hands and eyes.

How much less did he limit it to some particular number, like twelve or thirty-two or thirty-three! ‘Ever so many’ is synonymous with ‘beyond count’. The phrase ‘ever so many’ is not limited as to what sort or how many. Since it is not limited to any sort or amount, you should not limit it, not even by calculating it to be an unbounded, limitless amount. You need to explore through your training that the underlying meaning of the phrase ‘ever so many’ is just like this, for it has already gone beyond the bounds of the immeasurable and the unbounded.

Now, in taking up Ungan’s phrase ‘His ever so many hands and eyes’, Dōgo did not say that it did not reveal the Matter, so it must have contained the underlying principle. Ungan and Dōgo were in complete harmony with each other and stood shoulder-to-shoulder, having already trained together under Yakusan for forty years. During that time, they had discussed accounts from both the past and the present, rooting out what was not correct and verifying what was correct. Because they had trained together in this manner, when on this day they stated ‘His ever so many hands and eyes’, Ungan was making a statement and Dōgo was verifying it. Keep in mind that ‘His ever so many hands and eyes’ was being discussed by both of these Old Buddhas alike. Both Ungan and Dōgo are clearly in accord concerning ‘His ever so many hands and eyes’, so Ungan now asks Dōgo what use Kannon makes of them. Do not consider his question to be the same as the types of questions raised by academic teachers of Scriptures and scholarly writers of commentaries, or by the ‘thrice wise and ten times saintly’.* This question has elicited a spiritual affirmation: it has elicited ‘hands and eyes’. Now, there may well be Old Buddhas, as well as more recent Buddhas, who have realized Buddhahood through the force of Ungan’s having said, “What use does He make of His ever so many hands and eyes?” Ungan could also have said, “What does He accomplish by making use of His ever so many hands and eyes?” And he could also have expressed the Matter as “What is it that He does?” or “What does He put into motion?” or “What is He expressing?”

> Dōgo replied, “He is like someone in the night who reaches behind himself, his hand groping for his pillow.”

To express the underlying principle, Dōgo gives as an example someone who is groping behind himself for a pillow in the middle of the night. ‘Groping for’ means ‘searching for’. ‘In the night’ is a way of saying ‘being in the dark’, just as we might speak of ‘seeing a mountain in the light of day’. That is, ‘using one’s hands and eyes’ is like someone in the night reaching behind himself, his hand groping for a pillow. We need to investigate ‘using one’s hands and eyes’ on this basis. And we need to examine ‘in the night’ from the perspective of ‘in the light of day’, as

well as from the perspective of when it is nighttime, and we need to examine it from the perspective of a time that is neither day nor night.[2] When people grope for a pillow, even though they do not understand it as something resembling Kannon's using His hands and eyes, we do not and cannot escape from the principle that it is just like that.

Can it be that the 'someone' who is 'like someone who' is just a word in a simile? And further, is this 'someone' an ordinary, everyday person or might it be someone who is no ordinary, everyday person? If we study it as being an ordinary, everyday Buddhist, then there is something we need to investigate in 'groping for a pillow'. Even a pillow has some shape or design that needs our inquiry. And 'the night' might not simply be 'the night' which ordinary people and those in lofty positions mean by 'day and night'. You need to realize that what is being said is not about getting hold of the pillow, or about finding the pillow, or about pushing the pillow away. If we investigate what underlies Dōgo's saying, "in the night, reaching behind himself, his hand groping for a pillow," we need to see, and not disregard, the eyes that show you the night. A hand that is groping for a pillow has not yet touched its edge. If reaching behind with the hand is essential, then is there something essential that needs to be reached with the eyes? We need to clarify what 'the night' means. Would it refer to the realm of hands and eyes? Is it in possession of human hands and eyes? Or is it just hands and eyes alone, flashing like bolts of lightning? Is it one or two instances of hands and eyes being right from head to tail? If we examine the matter in this way, then the use of ever so many hands is present. But who is the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion? It is as if all that is heard is 'the Bodhisattva of Hands and Eyes'. If that is so, then we should ask, "What does the Bodhisattva of Hands and Eyes use ever so many Bodhisattvas of Great Compassion for?"

You need to realize that even though hands and eyes do not stand against each other, they are making use of That Which Is, and That Which Is is making use of them. When That Which Is expresses Itself in this way, even though the whole of Its 'hands and eyes' are never hidden from us, we must not look for a time when It expresses Itself as 'the whole of Its hands and eyes'. Even though there are Its hands and eyes that are never hidden from us, and even though these hands and eyes do exist, they are not our self, nor are they mountains and oceans, nor are they the countenance of the sun or the countenance of the moon, nor are they "Your very mind is Buddha."

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2. That is, 'being in the dark' and 'seeing something in the light of day' are metaphors, and do not refer to a temporal night and day.

Ungan's words, "I get it, I get it!" are not saying, "I understand Dōgo's words." It is an "I get It, I get It!" in relation to his having made a statement about the hands and eyes that That Which Is makes use of, which will be Its making free use of the here and now, and Its having free entry into this present day.

Although Dōgo's expression, "What did you get?" is another way of his saying, "I've gotten It," it is one which does not stand against Ungan's "I get It." Even so, Dōgo had his own way of putting "What did you get," a way that means "I've got It and you've got It." Would this not be equivalent to "Our eyes get It and our hands get It?" Is it referring to an understanding that has emerged or to an understanding that has not yet emerged? While the understanding implied by "I get it" is synonymous with the 'I', you need to consider that there is a 'you' in "What did you get?"

What has come forth as a result of Ungan's statement, "His whole body is hands and eyes," is a plethora of Kannons who, in speaking of 'someone in the night reaching behind himself, his hand groping for his pillow', are exploring it by stating that one's whole body is nothing but hands and eyes. These Kannons indeed are Kannons, even though They have not yet been able to put it into Their own words. When Ungan said, "His whole body is hands and eyes," he was not saying that hands and eyes are the Dharma Body which exists everywhere. Even though everywhere is the whole universe, the hands and eyes of our body at this instant will not be the Everywhere that is everywhere. Even though the hands and eyes of our body can perform the meritorious actions of the Everywhere, they cannot be the hands and eyes that leave the marketplace with stolen goods. The meritorious activities of hands and eyes will be beyond the sort of seeing, behaving, and expressing that judges rightness. These hands and eyes are already described as being 'ever so many', so they are beyond a thousand, beyond ten thousand, beyond eighty-four thousand, and beyond the immeasurable and the unbounded. Not only is it like the whole body being hands and eyes, it is also like giving voice to the Dharma in order to rescue sentient beings, and like letting loose the Light throughout the nations. Therefore, you should explore through your training that it must be, as Ungan put it, that your whole body is hands and eyes. So, even though he says to use your whole body as hands and eyes, and even though he says to change your demeanor, now being active, now resting, do not let yourself be disturbed by this.

> Dōgo replied, "What you have said is very well put. Still, it only expresses eighty or ninety percent of the Matter."

The main point of what Dōgo said here is that Ungan's expression is very well put. 'Putting it very well' means that what one says hits the mark and that it clarifies the Matter, with nothing left unexpressed. When what has not been expressed before is now finally expressed so that nothing remains that has not been expressed, it will still only be expressing eighty or ninety percent of the Matter.

Even if your exploration of the intent behind what Ungan said were one hundred percent, if you are still unable to put It in words, then your have not thoroughly explored the Matter. And even if Ungan's way of putting It was eighty or ninety percent of the Matter, it was still his expression of It, which might be eighty or ninety percent on the mark or one hundred percent on the mark. At that very moment in time, Ungan might have stated the Matter through hundreds of thousands of myriad expressions, but his abilities were so wondrous that he offered only a bit of his abilities and expressed a bare eighty or ninety percent of the Matter. For instance, even if he had had hundreds of thousands of myriad abilities to bring forth the whole universe, what he actually said would surpass his leaving the Matter unsaid. At the same time, were he to take up just one of his abilities, it would not be an ordinary, worldly-wise ability. The meaning of this eighty or ninety percent is like this. Even so, when people hear the statement by an Ancestor of the Buddha that someone has expressed eighty or ninety percent of the Matter, they understand it to mean that it is only eighty or ninety percent because it does not come up to an expression that would be a hundred percent of the Matter. If the Buddha Dharma were like this, It would not have reached us today. You need to explore through your training that the so-called 'eighty or ninety percent' is an eighty or ninety percent of 'hundreds of thousands', as if we were speaking of 'ever so many'. Dōgo had already stated 'eighty or ninety percent of It' and he certainly knew that It must not be confined to a literal eighty or ninety percent. We need to explore through our training that this is the way that the Ancestors of the Buddha speak.

When Ungan said, "So much for the likes of me. How about you, my elder brother in the Dharma, what do you make of it?" he said "so much for the likes of me" because he wanted Dōgo to put into words what he called 'only expressing eighty or ninety percent of the Matter.' Although this is his 'not leaving any traces behind', it is also 'his arms being long and his sleeves being short'.[3] "While I have

3. Another way of expressing this is that, although his words leave no karmic wake (not leaving any traces behind), his intention in asking the question is obvious (his arms sticking out from his sleeves).

not yet exhausted the ways of saying what I have just said, I leave the matter as it is" is not what his expression "So much for the likes of me" means.

> Dōgo said, "His whole being, through and through, is hands and eyes."

These words of his are not saying that hands and eyes, as independent entities, are what one's whole being is through and through. What he is saying is that one's whole being, through and through, is hands and eyes. As a consequence, he is not saying that one's body is what hands and eyes are. Since 'with His ever so many hands and eyes' means 'using His hands and using His eyes',[4] His hands and eyes are, of necessity, the whole of Him being hands and eyes, through and through. In asking, "What does He do with His ever so many bodies and minds?" there will be the response, "His whole being, through and through, is whatever He is doing." What is more, it is not the case that Ungan's expression, 'whole body,' is not quite complete whereas Dōgo's expression, 'whole being, through and through,' is thoroughly complete. Ungan's 'whole body' and Dōgo's 'whole being, through and through' are not open to any discussion of their comparative value, and the 'ever so many hands and eyes' that was stated by each of them is an expression of That Which Is.

Thus, the Kannon of whom our old Master Shakyamuni spoke only had a thousand hands and eyes, or twelve faces, or thirty-three bodies or eighty-four thousand bodies. The Kannon of Ungan and Dōgo had ever so many hands and eyes and is beyond any talk about quantities. When you explore through your training the Kannon of Ungan and Dōgo, which has ever so many hands and eyes, then you, together with all Buddhas, will realize eighty or ninety percent of Kannon's meditative state.

Given on the twenty-sixth day of the fourth lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (May 27, 1242).

4. The Chinese character, read as *yō* in Japanese, when functioning as a preposition means 'with', and when functioning as a verb, means 'to use'.

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Now, since the Buddha Dharma has come from the West, many Ancestors of the Buddha have spoken about Kannon, but they have not equaled Ungan and Dōgo, and for that reason, I spoke only about this Kannon of theirs. As Yōka Genkaku said in his poem, "The Song That Attests to the Way":

> *Not stuck on seeing just one single thing: this we call being a Tathagata;*
> *Such a one can be called a Kanjizai, one who regards all things just as they are.*

This is evidence that even though the Tathagata and Kannon manifest in Their particular bodily forms, They are not separate beings.

And there was also an exchange between Mayoku and Rinzai concerning the true Hands and Eyes.[5] These are just a couple of cases among ever so many. There is Ummon's statement, "There are the Kannons who, upon seeing the forms of things, clarify Their minds, or who, upon hearing the sounds of things, awaken to the Way." What sights and sounds are not encompassed within Kanzeon Bodhisattva's seeing and hearing? And in Hyakujō's words, "There is His gateway for entering into the Truth." Among the assembly in the *Shurangama Scripture*, there are the Kannons who have fully realized the Way. And among the assembly in the *Lotus Scripture*, there is the Kannon who manifests everywhere. All these Kannons are identical with the Buddhas and They are identical with the great earth with its mountains and rivers. Yet, at the same time, They are but one or two of the ever so many hands and eyes.

Copied by me on the tenth day of midsummer in the third year of the Ninji era (June 9, 1242).

Ejō

5. This exchange is recounted in the Translator's Addendum immediately following this discourse.

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Translator's Addendum from Book 3, Kōan 44 of Dōgen's Chinese *Shinji Shōbōgenzō*

Once while Mayoku Hōtetsu was training in Rinzai's community, he asked Rinzai, "Which is the true Eye of the Compassionate One with a Thousand Hands and Eyes?"

Rinzai replied, "Which is the true Eye of the Compassionate One with a Thousand Hands and Eyes? Well, quick, you tell me! Speak right up!"

Thereupon, Mayoku pulled Rinzai down off his chief monk's seat in the Meditation Hall and sat himself down in Rinzai's place.

Rinzai got up off the floor and said, "Well, how do you do!" Mayoku was about to respond, when Rinzai suddenly gave out a Zen shout, pulled Mayoku off the chief monk's seat, and sat back down on it.

Mayoku got up off the floor and [since he had been bested] left the hall.

33

On Arhats

(Arakan)

Translator's Introduction: The Sanskrit word *'arhat'* means 'one who is venerable' or 'one worthy of respect'. It is used in Buddhism to designate someone who has arrived at an advanced spiritual stage that is marked by being completely free of defiling passions. The term, however, has somewhat different meanings within the various traditions of Buddhism, ranging from the highest level of spiritual attainment (one who is a living Buddha) to one who is just on the brink of entering Buddhahood. While the concept of the arhat has occupied a central position in Southern Buddhist traditions, it tends to be given a secondary position in Mahayana traditions, with the bodhisattva ideal being primary. Dōgen's discourse, however, covers much broader and varied applications of the term, thereby embracing a more universal perspective.

> "With all their desires already completely spent and having gone beyond all defiling passions, they have succeeded in reaching what truly benefits them, and, having brought to an end the bonds to existence, their minds have been set free."[1]

This describes what the great arhats are, for arhathood is the ultimate fruit of those who study the Buddha Dharma. These are the Buddha arhats who are called 'Those of the Fourth Stage'.[2]

'All their desires' is equivalent to a wooden ladle with its handle broken off. Though, up to now, the ladle has been used many times, an arhat's complete wearing out of self is the whole body of the Wooden Ladle springing forth. 'Their having succeeded in reaching what truly benefits them' is synonymous with Its whole Body emerging from the crown of their head.

'Their having brought the bonds of existence to an end' is the same as their never concealing anything anywhere in the universe. And we need to investigate thoroughly that the way in which their minds perceive the forms and characteristics of things, once their minds have been set free, is synonymous with 'high places

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1. This is Shakyamuni Buddha's definition of arhats found in the opening passages of the Lotus Scripture.

2. See the 'Four Stages of Arhathood' in the *Glossary.*

being naturally in balance up high, and low places being naturally in balance down low'. Because of this, they have their own tiles and stones for their walls and fences.[3]

'Being set free' is synonymous with their mind's manifesting all functions. Their not returning to their defiling passions is synonymous with defiling passions not yet arising, which is spoken of as 'defiling passions being obstructed by defiling passions'.[4]

Further, an arhat's marvelous spiritual abilities, wise discernment, meditative states, giving voice to the Dharma, leading others, and letting the Light of Truth shine forth are not to be likened to abilities discussed by non-Buddhists, quarrelsome bedeviling people, and the like. Teachings about an arhat's ability to see such things as hundreds of Buddha realms are never to be associated with the views and opinions of ordinary, worldly people. The principle of this is: "Although we have just said that a barbarian's beard is red, there is also the fact that a person with a red beard is a barbarian."[5] 'Entering nirvana' is an arhat's practice of getting inside his, or her, own Fist.[6] Thus, the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana is a place which an arhat does not turn away from or shun. Arhats who have entered their own Nostrils are those we call true arhats: those who have not entered their own Nostrils are not arhats.[7]

It was said in olden times in the *Lotus Scripture*, "We today are also true arhats, and, by our voicing of the Buddha's Way, we can help all to hear It." The main point of 'we can help all to hear It' is that we can help all things to be voices of Buddha. Why would anyone stop at just listening to Buddhas and Their disciples? When all those who are conscious of It and have knowledge of It, who

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3, That is, they have their own way of thinking about things.

4. 'Defiling passions being obstructed by defiling passions' means that when an arhat sees defiling passions arise in others, he or she keeps defiling passions from arising in response, because the arhat sees the suffering that will arise from giving in to such passions.

5. A saying by Meditation Master Hyakujō, referring to two ways of saying the same thing. In other words, a person who has such properties is an arhat, and an arhat is a person who has such properties.

6. That is, operating from the place of enlightenment within.

7. 'Someone entering his, or her, Nostrils' is a common Zen Buddhist metaphor for someone who has awakened to the Truth: such a one has gotten 'a whiff of It'.

have Its Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow, proceed to help others hear It, that is what I would call 'helping all'. Our 'being conscious of It and having knowledge of It' is synonymous with the grasses and trees of our native land and with the tiles and stones of our walls and fences.* What we hear is the rising and falling away of all these things, their flourishing and fading out, their births and deaths, their comings and goings. But the basis of helping all to hear the Buddha's Way by means of our voicing It is not simply exploring through our training that the whole world is an ear.

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Shakyamuni Buddha once said the following, "If any among My disciples would call themselves arhats or pratyekabuddhas,* but have not heard or realized the fact that the Buddha Tathagatas only instruct bodhisattvas,* they are not the Buddha's disciples, nor are they arhats, nor are they pratyekabuddhas." The Buddha's saying that He only instructed bodhisattvas means "I, along with the Buddhas in the ten quarters, know this well, for each Buddha on His own, together with all Buddhas, has been able to exhaustively explore the True Form of all things, which is what supreme, fully perfected enlightenment is." Thus, to consider oneself to be a bodhisattva or a Buddha must accord with considering oneself to be an arhat or a pratyekabuddha. And why is this? Because to think of oneself in this way means that one has heard and recognized the fact that all the Buddha Tathagatas only instruct bodhisattvas.

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Long ago it was said, "In the Scriptures of the shravakas,* arhat is the name given to those who have realized Buddhahood." What is said here is confirmation of what the Buddha said. It is not simply the preaching of some faint-hearted scholastic commentator, but expresses a universal principle in the Way of the Buddha. You need to explore through your training the principle of calling an arhat someone who has realized Buddhahood, and you need to explore through your training the principle of calling someone who has realized Buddhahood an arhat. Apart from the effects of arhathood, nothing else remains, not even a single mote of dust or a single thought or thing—still less does fully perfected enlightenment remain as something separate from arhathood! Apart from supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, again, nothing else remains, not even a single mote of dust or a

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* See *Glossary.*

single thought or thing—still less do the four stages and four results of arhathood remain as something separate from supreme, fully perfected enlightenment![8] At the very moment when an arhat is carrying all thoughts and things upon his shoulders, all these thoughts and things are truly beyond being 'eight ounces or half a pound'.[9] And they are beyond mind, beyond Buddha, and beyond material things. Even the Eye of a Buddha cannot see them, look as It will. So, we need not get into discussions about eighty thousand eons before and eighty thousand eons after. All that remains to such a one is just the complete Dharma.

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Shakyamuni once said the following:

> If any of these male and female monks should tell themselves, "I have already realized arhathood and am in my final embodiment, which is ultimate nirvana," and therefore give up their intention to seek supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, you should, by all means, know that such as these are all braggarts. And why? Because if there were monks who had truly realized arhathood, they would not have arrived at such a state unless they trusted this Dharma of Mine.

What is said here confirms that those who are able to trust in supreme, fully perfected enlightenment are arhats. To have trust in this Dharma, of necessity, is to depend on It. One who has truly realized arhathood is beyond such statements as "I have already realized arhathood and am in my final embodiment, which is ultimate nirvana," because such a one is intent on seeking supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. To aspire to seek supreme, fully perfected enlightenment is to take delight in one's Eye, to sit there facing a wall, and, in facing the wall, to open one's Eye. Though we may say that fully perfected enlightenment encompasses the whole world, it is 'gods appearing and demons vanishing', and though we may say that it extends over all of time, it is 'the mutual throwing of self and other into the moment at hand'.[10] We call one who is like this someone who is intent on seeking

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8. The four results of arhathood refer to the results that arise from attaining each of the four stages.

9. That is, they are beyond our ability to measure.

10. The two quotes are from a poem by Meditation Master Engo, which Dōgen quotes on page 293 of Discourse 22: On the Everyday Behavior of a Buddha Doing His Practice (*Gyōbutsu*

supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. Thus, such a one is intent on seeking arhathood. Aspiring to seek arhathood is being satisfied with gruel and being satisfied with rice.

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Meditation Master Engo of Mount Kassan once said the following:

> After those of old had caught the drift, they would go off into remote mountain areas, living in huts fashioned of mallows or thatch, or in rock caves. For ten or twenty years they would dine on rice boiled in a broken-footed pot. For the most part, they would forget human society, having taken their leave of its defiling domains forever. In our present age, I dare not aspire to live like that, so I simply conceal my former name, cover my tracks, and keep to what I ought to do, which is to become an old monk, all skin and bones, living in accord with what I have realized, and making use of what I have received as it accords with my abilities. Wearing away my old karma,* I would adapt myself to the age-old ways. Had I any strength to spare, I suppose I would extend it to others, creating conditions for the development of wise discernment, and training myself to stand on my own two feet and to ripen naturally. It would be as if in some wilderness covered deep in tall grasses, I set about to hack out one whole real person, or at least half a one. Then, knowing that I too have It, together with all others, I would rid myself of birth-and-death, ever benefiting more and more those who are to come in the future, that I might repay my deep indebtedness to the Buddhas and Ancestors.
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> However much I may restrain myself, I suppose I cannot prevent the frosts and dews of my years from ripening the fruits of my karma. And so, I will need to reenter the world and adapt myself to accord with circumstances, opening up and entrusting myself to ordinary people and those in lofty positions, but without letting my mind manipulate me into seeking for gain. And how much less could I possibly enslave myself to the influence of the nobility only to become a mediocre, fawning teacher who acts to deceive the common folk, who scorns the saintly, who courts gain, who contrives to win a

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Iigi). The first describes the arbitrary way that thoughts and things arise and disappear, and the second describes how arhats function.

> name for himself, and thereby creates for himself the karmic consequence of living in an Avichi hell of unremitting suffering! If only I could go through the world in such a manner as to produce no karmic wake—though I may not have the chance—would I not then be an arhat who has left behind the defiling world?

Accordingly, a genuine monk here and now is an arhat, one who has left behind the defiling world. If you would know what an arhat is, know that it is like this. Do not let yourself be led astray by the words of Indian scholastics. Meditation Master Engo of China was an Ancestor of the Buddha who had inherited the True Transmission.

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Hyakujō Ekai in Hungchou Province once said, "When our eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind, each and every one of them, no longer covet and are no longer tainted by thoughts and things, either material or immaterial, we call this 'accepting and keeping to a four-line verse', as well as 'the fourth stage.'"[11] It is impossible for any of us to change our eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind into something different from what they are, for they are completely, from top to toe, beyond our fathoming. As a consequence, such a one's whole being is naturally beyond covetousness or stain, and the whole of all thoughts and things, material and immaterial, is beyond covetousness or stain. It means that one's accepting and keeping to a four-line verse is naturally beyond coveting or staining anything, and we call this 'the fourth stage'. And the fourth stage is that of an arhat. Thus, the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind that fully manifest before us here and now are what an arhat is. From beginning to end, such a one will be naturally free from delusion. 'Arriving immediately at the barrier gate' is synonymous with accepting and keeping to a four-line verse.[12] Accordingly, it is the fourth stage. Right from the crown of his head to the bottoms of his feet, his, or her, whole body fully manifests It and there is not the slightest thread or hair that has been omitted.

In short, were I to express the Matter,* how would I word it? I might put it this way: When an arhat is in a worldly state of mind, all thoughts and things serve

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11. 'A four-line verse' is a common reference to Scriptural Teachings given in verse by Shakyamuni Buddha.

12. 'The barrier gate' is a common Zen Buddhist metaphor for the unobstructed gateway into realizing enlightenment.

to obstruct him. When an arhat is in a saintly state of mind, all thoughts and things serve to liberate him. By all means, you must realize that an arhat and all thoughts and things are fellow trainees. When an arhat has already awakened, he is restricted by 'being an arhat'. This is why, since before the time of the Lord of Emptiness, arhats have been Old Fists.[13]

Given to the assembly on the fifteenth day of the fifth lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (June 14, 1242), while residing at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple in the Uji district of Yamashiro Province.

Copied by me on the sixteenth day of the sixth lunar month in the first year of the Kenji era (July 11, 1275).

Ejō

13. The Lord of Emptiness refers to the first of the Seven Buddhas, the One who lived during the Age of Emptiness, that is, before duality had first arisen. 'Old Fists' implies that arhats, from beginningless time, have been embodiments of Ultimate Reality.

34

On the Cypress Tree

(Hakujushi)

Translator's Introduction: The subject of this discourse derives from a kōan story in which a monk asks Meditation Master Jōshū what Bodhidharma's intent was in coming to China. Jōshū responds by alluding to a tree called a *'hakuju'* in Japanese and a *'pai-shu'* in Chinese. Even though these two words are written with the same Chinese characters, they designate two different types of tree: the Japanese *hakuju* tree is an oak (a deciduous tree), whereas the Chinese *pai-shu* tree is a type of cypress (an evergreen conifer).

In China, since at least the time of Confucius, the cypress has been paired with the pine tree. Because these two trees, unlike all others, do not lose their foliage even in the severest of winters, they have been used as a common metaphor in China for friends who remain constant in adversity. When this metaphorical meaning is applied to Jōshū's alluding to the cypress, it describes the intent behind Bodhidharma's coming to China, namely, to find a true spiritual friend (disciple) who would remain constant in adversity. The one he found was Eka, who proved his constancy by standing in the courtyard outside Bodhidharma's quarters in the ever-deepening snow and then later proffering his 'severed arm' to the Indian Master as evidence of his commitment. (This 'severing' may refer to giving up one's attachments rather than to a literal, physical act.) The nature of the relationship between Bodhidharma as Master and Eka as disciple becomes clearer when Bodhidharma is seen to represent the pine (a common metaphor for the Eternal) and Eka is seen as the cypress. In a subsequent kōan story, this relationship is expressed as the Empty Sky and the cypress tree.

Jōshū was of the thirty-seventh generation after the Tathagata Shakyamuni. He was sixty-one years old when he first gave rise to the intention to seek the Truth and left home life behind to explore the Way. At that time he made a vow, saying, "Even if someone is a hundred years old, if that person is spiritually less advanced than I, I shall offer that person Teaching. And even if someone is seven years old, if that person has spiritually surpassed me, I shall ask that person for Teaching." Vowing thus, he drifted southward like a cloud.

While wandering about in search of the True Way, Jōshū chanced to arrive at Mount Nansen, whereupon he went to make his prostrations to the Abbot, the monk Nansen Fugan, who happened to be in his quarters, resting, when Jōshū came for his initial interview.

> Nansen immediately asked him, "Where have you just come from?"

Jōshū replied, "From the Hall of the Auspicious Image."[1]

Nansen asked, "And have you seen the Auspicious Image?"

Jōshū replied, "I have not yet seen the Auspicious Image, but what I have encountered is a reclining Tathagata."[2]

Thereupon Nansen immediately arose and asked him, "Are you a novice that has a Master not?"

Jōshū responded, "A novice that has found his Master."[3]

Nansen then asked, "And just who is that Master of yours?"

Jōshū replied, with all sincerity, "Though the early spring is still cold,[4] as I was doing my prostrations, I could not help but reflect on how grateful I am for the health of your august body, Venerable Monk. It is like ten thousand blessings."

Thereupon, Nansen called for the Head Monk of the Meditation Hall and told him, "Put this novice in the special place!"[5]

Thus it was that Jōshū took up residence with Nansen, and, for thirty years, did his utmost to practice the Way, without once going off to some other temple. He never idled away a moment or engaged in other pursuits. Then, after he had been Transmitted and received the methods for teaching others how to train in the Way, he took up residence in Kannon-in Monastery in Jōshū Province for another thirty years. While he was Abbot there, the things he did and how he did them were different from the behavior of ordinary monks in other places.

On one occasion, he composed the following verse:

In vain do I gaze upon the smoke from the hearths of my neighbors on all sides.
Jam-filled buns and rice cakes, for a year now, have parted company from me.
Thinking about them today, I can only swallow my spit.

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1. The name of a temple building on Mount Nansen.
2. Nansen's question has a double meaning. Taken on a conventional level it simply refers to a statue of the Buddha that is in a particular temple hall, whereas on a spiritual level it is asking Jōshū whether he has had a kenshō yet. Jōshū's response takes the latter intent.
3. That is, as his subsequent remark implies, he already regards Nansen as his Master.
4. Jōshū's reference to the early spring being cold is his way of expressing how young and inexperienced he is in training with a Master.
5. The 'special place' is an area in the Meditation Hall directly behind the senior monks. New novices who had already demonstrated their understanding of what monastic life is about were seated there.

Periods of mindfulness are few, bemoanings all too frequent.
Among hundreds of families, not a single good and friendly face is to be found.
Those who come by merely say, "I've just dropped in for a cup of tea."
Unable to have any tea, they leave in a snit.

How sad that a smoking fire in his own hearth was rare, that even a one-dish meal was so scarce, and that he had not had a varied meal since the year before. When anyone from among those hundreds of families came, they were in search of a cup of tea, and those who were not in search of a cup of tea did not come at all. There was not one from amongst those hundreds of families who came bringing tea.[6] Occasionally, there was a novice who came to look at 'the wise one',[7] but there was not a single dragon elephant* who wished to be his equal.

On another occasion he composed a verse:

When I think about those throughout the country who have left home life behind,
How many can there be whose state resembles my state in life?
Earth for a bed, broken reeds for a mat,
An old elm branch for a pillow, and nothing at all for a coverlet.
Before His revered image, there is no Peaceful Breath incense to be burned,
And from the ashes all I smell is the scent of cow dung."[8]

From what he said, we should recognize the spotlessness and purity of his temple, and we should learn from these traces that he left behind for us today. There were

6. 'In search of a cup of tea' is a Zen Buddhist metaphor for someone seeking a Master in order to get 'enlightenment' but, in Jōshū's case, none were willing to stay and train. 'Bringing tea' is an allusion to those who come to a Master and selflessly offer their training, or to someone who has had a kenshō and seeks to have it confirmed.

7. This is an allusion to the custom of monks, and novices in particular, to go traveling to other monasteries during the summer months in order to train under a Master other than their own.

* See *Glossary.*

8. Peaceful Breath was a type of incense made from a tree resin and widely used in temples throughout China. The cheapest forms of incense were made from cow dung.

not many monks in his assembly, maybe twenty at most. His Monks' Hall was not large, lacking both a front hall and a back hall.[9] It had no lighting at night and there was no charcoal for wintry weather. Sad to say, the conditions there could be described as the way that old folks live in their declining years. And the deportment of Old Buddhas was like this.

Once when a leg on his meditation platform broke, Jōshū tied a charred log to it and it lasted for years. Whenever an officer of the temple commented that the leg needed to be repaired, the Master would not permit it. This is a good example, one rare in any generation.

Customarily, the rice for their gruel was so thinned down that there was not even a single grain of rice in it, so the monks would distract themselves at meals by turning their gaze towards tranquil windows or towards the dust in some crack. Sometimes they would gather nuts or berries, which both the assembly of monks and the Abbot himself would use for their daily sustenance. We trainees of today should praise this deportment, and though we do not surpass the Master's deportment, we should make our attitude of mind one of fond respect for the past.

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Once, when Jōshū was addressing his assembly, he said:

> For thirty years, I lived in the south intent on nothing but doing seated meditation. If any of you wish to realize the One Great Matter,* you will encounter It by pursuing the principle of doing seated meditation. If after three years, or five years, or twenty years, or even thirty years, you can still say that you have not realized the Truth, take the skull of this old monk and make it into a pot to piss in.

That is the kind of vow he took. Truly, doing the practice of seated meditation is the straight road of the Buddha's Way. We should follow the principle of "Just sit and you shall see what happens." Later, people would say of him, "Jōshū was truly an Old Buddha."

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> Great Master Jōshū once had a monk who asked him, "What did our Ancestral Master Bodhidharma come from the West for?"
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> The Master replied, "For a cypress tree in the courtyard."

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9. The front hall contained meditation platforms which were used by temple officials and guests. The back hall traditionally contained a washstand and was used as a cleanup area for the monks who lived in the Monks' Hall.

> The monk then said, "Venerable Monk, pray, do not use some physical object to point it out to a person like me."
>
> The Master said, "I am not pointing it out to you by using a physical object."
>
> The monk again asked, "Well then, what did our Ancestral Master come from the West for?"
>
> The Master replied, "For a cypress tree in the courtyard."[10]

Although this particular kōan* sprang from the mind of Jōshū, ultimately it is what all Buddhas have habitually put into practice with Their whole being. In doing so, They skillfully lead trainees by asking, "Who is the One in Charge?"[11] The main points that you need to recognize at present are the principles that a cypress tree in the courtyard does not refer to a concrete object and that 'a cypress tree' is not one particular person. This is why, when the monk said, "Venerable Monk, pray, do not use some physical object to point it out to a person like me," Jōshū replied, "I am not pointing it out to you by using a physical object." What venerable monk is limited to being a 'venerable monk'? Because he is not so limited, he will be Jōshū's 'I'. And what I is limited to being that 'I'? And even if he were so limited, he would still be referring to a person. And what physical object would not be limited by Bodhidharma's intention of coming from the West, since a physical object must certainly have been what he intended by coming from the West?[12] Even so, his intention in coming from the West was not dependent on some physical object, nor was it necessarily for the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, which is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, that the Ancestral Master came from the West. Nor was it for someone's heart or mind, or for a Buddha, or for some concrete thing.

Now, "What did our Ancestral Master Bodhidharma come from the West for?" was not the monk's asking some idle question, nor was it a matter of two people being able to see things alike. It was a matter of one person—namely, Jōshū's monk—who had still not been able to experience a mutual encounter with his Master, so how much could he himself have actually realized?[13] Or, to put it

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10. That is, Bodhidharma came to find a true spiritual friend who, like the metaphorical 'cypress tree', would be constant in all adversity.

11. 'The One in Charge' is another name for one's Buddha Nature.

12. That is, Bodhidharma did not come searching for a physical object in the form of a botanical tree. Rather, he came searching for a physical object in the form of a true spiritual friend, and happened to find such a one in the person of Eka.

13. 'A mutual encounter' not only refers to a disciple meeting a Master who recognizes him as a

another way, the monk had always been 'that kind of person'. Therefore, even though he was mistaken time after time, because he was mistaken time after time, he was paying close attention to his mistakes in making mistakes.[14] Would this not be his hearing what is false and his taking its ramifications in hand?

Because his openhearted spirit was devoid of any attachment to duality, the monk was a veritable 'cypress tree in the courtyard'. When there is no physical object, there can be no 'cypress tree in the courtyard'. Even though the cypress tree is a physical object, Jōshū said, "I am not pointing it out to you by using a physical object," and his disciple said, "Venerable Monk, pray, do not use some physical object to point it out to a person like me." The monk was not like some old ancestral tomb.[15] And because he was not an old tomb to begin with, he was able to bring It forth from where It had been entombed. And because It had been brought forth from where It had been entombed, this was comparable to Jōshū's saying to his disciple, "Come on, return my efforts!" And because he was saying, in effect, "Come on, show me It!" he said, "I am not pointing it out to you by using a physical object, so, come on, show It to me!" Well, what will the monk use to point it out with? It could be by his responding, "I am also like this."

There was a monk who asked Great Master Jōshū, "Does a cypress tree also have Buddha Nature?"

The Great Master replied, "Yes, he has."

The monk then asked, "When does such a tree realize Buddhahood?"

The Great Master replied, "He waits for the Empty Sky to come down to earth."

The monk then asked, "And when does the Empty Sky come down to earth?"

The Great Master said, "It waits for a cypress tree to realize Buddhahood."

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worthy vessel for the Dharma, but it also refers to the mutual recognition of each other's Buddha Nature, that is, 'Buddha recognizes Buddha, and Buddha bows to Buddha'.

14. That is, a disciple who is a genuine vessel for the Dharma will persist in making mistakes through misunderstanding what the Master is pointing to until he sees where he is wrong, which he can only do by being willing to make mistakes in the first place.

15. That is, the monk was not spiritually dead to begin with.

Listen to what the Great Master is saying now, and do not disregard what that monk is asking. The Great Master's phrases, "when the Empty Sky comes down to earth" and "when a cypress tree realizes Buddhahood," do not express their mutually waiting for each other. It is the monk's asking about a cypress tree, about Buddha Nature, about 'the time when', about the Empty Sky, and about coming down to earth.

Now, by the Great Master's responding to the monk, "Yes, he has," he means that the Buddha Nature of a cypress tree does exist. By penetrating into what he is saying, you will penetrate into the meaning of the bloodline of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Saying that Buddha Nature exists in a so-called 'cypress tree' is saying something that cannot be expressed with conventional ways of speaking, nor had it ever yet been so expressed. A cypress tree already has Buddha Nature, so we need to clarify this state of affairs. Since he has Buddha Nature, we should inquire into how high a cypress tree is, how long his lifespan, what the measurements of his body are, and we should hear about his species and his lineage. Further, are the hundreds of thousands of cypress trees all of the same species or are they of different bloodlines? Can there be cypress trees that realize Buddhahood, and cypress trees that are doing the training and practice, and cypress trees that have awakened to the enlightened Mind? Though a cypress tree may have realized Buddhahood, will he not be equipped with such things as training and practice or will he not have an awakening to the enlightened Mind? And, pray, what are the causes and coexisting conditions that connect a cypress tree and the Empty Sky? If a cypress tree's becoming Buddha is indeed the time when "I am awaiting Your coming down to earth," is the merit of a cypress tree invariably synonymous with the Empty Sky? In regard to the status of a cypress tree, we need to do our utmost to explore in detail whether Empty Space is the tree's initial position or his ultimate status. Let me put it to you, dear old Jōshū, is it because you too were a withered cypress tree that you could breathe such life into these matters?

In summary, a cypress tree's having Buddha Nature is beyond the realm of non-Buddhists or those of the two Lower Courses,* and the like, and is something that academic teachers of Scripture and those who compose scholarly commentaries have not encountered or heard about. And how much less could it be presented by the flowery speech of some dead tree or some heap of cold ashes! Simply, it is only those of Jōshū's species who explore the Matter thoroughly through their training.

Now, as to a cypress tree having Buddha Nature, which Jōshū expressed, is a cypress tree limited by being called 'a cypress tree', and is Buddha Nature limited by being called 'Buddha Nature'? This expression of Jōshū's is not something that

a single Buddha or even two Buddhas have thoroughly exhausted. Even someone with the countenance of a Buddha would not necessarily be able to thoroughly exhaust what he expressed. Even among Buddhas, there may be Buddhas who express it and there may be Buddhas who cannot express it.

The phrase 'waiting for the Empty Sky to come down to earth' does not describe something that cannot happen, since every time a cypress tree realizes Buddhahood, the Empty Sky comes down to earth. Its coming down to earth is not concealed, but rather it is louder than even a hundred thousand rolls of thunder. When a cypress tree realizes Buddhahood, it will not only be within the twenty-four hours of some day, but it will also be within the time that surpasses any day's twenty-four hours.[16] The Empty Sky that comes down to earth is not only the empty sky that is seen by ordinary people or saintly ones. There is an Empty Sky in addition to the empty sky. It is something that others do not see, but which Jōshū himself encountered. The Earth which the Empty Sky comes down to is also not the earth that ordinary people or saintly ones inhabit, for there is also an Earth apart from that. It is not something that darkness or light reaches, and it was reached by Jōshū all alone. At the time when the Empty Sky comes down to Earth, even the Sun and Moon, even the Mountains and Rivers will have been waiting for It. Who says that Buddha Nature must invariably realize Buddhahood? Buddha Nature is a splendorous decoration that comes after realizing Buddhahood. Thus, a cypress tree and Buddha Nature are not different notes in the same tune.[17] In other words, They are indefinable, so we need to explore Them by asking, "What are They like?"

Delivered to the assembly during the season of the Japanese iris, on the twenty-first day of the fifth lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (June 20, 1242), while residing at Kannondōri Temple in the Uji district of Yamashiro Province.

Copied by me on the third day of the seventh lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (July 21, 1243).

Ejō

16. That is, it not only occurs within time (the twenty-four hours of a day) but goes beyond time (in the original text, this was expressed as 'the twenty-six hours of a day').

17. That is, they are not different words for the same thing.

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On the Brightness of the Light

(Kōmyō)

Translator's Introduction: The word *'kōmyō'* has various meanings in this discourse. It refers to a sort of light, or 'glow', which can be seen in someone for whom the clouds of spiritual ignorance have dispersed. However, it also refers to that which underlies this manifestation: the shining forth of one's Buddha Nature both spiritually and physically. It also refers to the functioning of one's innate wise discernment. Hence, in this translation it is rendered in a variety of ways, depending on the immediate context: (physical) brightness, luminosity, glow, (spiritual) Brightness, and the Light.

Certain sections of this discourse may prove puzzling to some readers. Confusion may arise because Dōgen moves easily back and forth between referring to the brightness as a physical manifestation and the Brightness as a spiritual manifestation. Sometimes he means them both simultaneously. This is particularly evident in his discussion of the Eastern Quarter. A similar and more complex situation arises in regard to the kōan story of Meditation Master Ummon, where the practice of monks is likened to monastery buildings.

Great Master Chōsa Keishin of Hunan Province in Great Sung China, while addressing his assembly during a Dharma talk, once said:

> *The whole universe in all ten directions is a mendicant monk's Eye.*
> *The whole universe in all ten directions is a mendicant monk's everyday speech.*
> *The whole universe in all ten directions is a mendicant monk's whole body.*
> *The whole universe in all ten directions is the brightness of one's own being.*
> *The whole universe in all ten directions resides within the brightness of one's own being.*
> *In the whole universe in all ten directions there is not even one person who is not his, or her, own being.*

Our exploration of the words and ways of Buddhas through our practice with a Master must, by all means, be done with diligence. We must not become more and more casual and neglect it, for it is due to just such neglectfulness that teachers in

the past who gained an understanding of what spiritual Brightness is were rare indeed.

Emperor Kao-ming of the Later Han dynasty in China—his forbidden name was Chuang and his name at entombment was Emperor Hsein-tsung[1]—was the fourth princely son of Emperor Kuang-wu. In the tenth year of the Eihei era (67 C.E.), during the reign of Emperor Kao-ming, two Indian monks, Kashapamātanga and Dharmaraksha by name, were the first to introduce Buddhist Teachings into China. In front of a platform that had been set up as a place to burn their copies of the Sutras if they lost, the two monks defeated the heretical followers of the Taoists through argument, thereby exhibiting the spiritual powers of Buddhas.

Later, in the Chinese P'u-tung era (520-527), during the reign of Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty, our First Ancestor, Bodhidharma himself, traveled from India to Kuangchou Province in South China. He was the legitimate heir to the genuine Transmission of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. He was the twenty-eighth Dharma descendant from Shakyamuni Buddha. Subsequently, he was permitted to hang up his traveling staff at Shōrin-ji Monastery on a remote mountain peak at the foot of Mount Sūzan. He authentically Transmitted the Dharma to the Second Ancestor, our Great Ancestral Meditation Master Eka, who personally experienced the brightness of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Before that time, there was no one who had personally seen, or even heard of, the Brightness of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Much less did any of them recognize their own brightness. Even if they had encountered that brightness, bringing it forth from the crown of their own head, they did not explore it with their own Eye. As a result, they did not clarify whether the brightness was long or short, square or round, nor did they clarify whether the brightness was curling up or spreading out, tightening or loosening. Because they felt uncomfortable about encountering the Brightness, their brightness became more and more estranged from Brightness. Even though this estrangement was itself an aspect of the Brightness, it was obstructed by the estrangement.

Stinking skin bags* who have become more and more estranged from their Brightness—and their brightness—hold views and theories like the following, "A Buddha's light, as well as our own brightness, must be red, white, blue, or yellow, like the light from a fire or light shimmering upon water, or like the luster of a

1. In ancient China, emperors had a name that was for their use alone and, while the emperor was alive, no one, under penalty of death, was permitted to use that name as part of their own.

* See *Glossary.*

pearl or the sparkle of a jewel, or like the light from a dragon or a celestial being, or like the light of sun and moon." Although folks such as these may sometimes be following a spiritually good teacher or what the Scriptures say, when they hear words of Teaching concerning brightness, they imagine it to be like the light of a firefly. This cannot be considered as exploring the Matter* with a Master by means of using their own heads and eyes. From the Han dynasty through the Sui, T'ang, and Sung dynasties down to the present day, such outpourings of opinions have been many indeed. This is why you should not study under scholastic Dharma teachers or pay attention to the questionable theories put forth by such teachers of meditation.

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What is called 'the Brightness of the Buddhas and Ancestors' is the whole universe in all ten directions; It is the whole of Buddhas and the whole of Ancestors; It is each Buddha on His own, as well as all Buddhas; It is the light of Buddha; It is the Buddha illumined. Buddhas and Ancestors treat Buddhas and Ancestors as Brightness. Training with and awakening to this Brightness, They become Buddha, They sit as Buddha, and They realize Buddhahood. This is why it is said that this Light has illumined eighteen thousand Buddha lands in the Eastern Quarter.[2]

This is the Light that is talked about in kōan* stories. This Light is the Light of Buddha. What illumines the Eastern Quarter is the luminosity of the eastern quarter. The Eastern Quarter is something other than what conventional people discuss as some 'here' or 'there'. It is the very heart of the Dharma Realm and the very middle of the Fist. Even though the phrase 'the eastern quarter' puts limitations on the Eastern Quarter, it is a veritable half-pound of brightness. Through your training, you need to explore the point that the Eastern Quarter exists in this land of ours, that the Eastern Quarter exists in other lands, and that the Eastern Quarter exists in the eastern quarter. In the term 'eighteen thousand', 'ten thousand' means 'half a Fist' and 'half of this very heart and mind of ours'.[3] It does

2. The Eastern Quarter is the spiritual realm of Akshobya Buddha.

3. In the Chinese and Japanese counting systems, 'eighteen thousand' is written with three characters that could be read as '(one unit of) ten thousand and eight units of one thousand'. Thus, since 'eighteen thousand' represents the whole of the Fist and the whole of our being, the phrase '(one unit of) ten thousand', as half of the whole expression, represents half the Fist and half of this very heart and mind of ours. In other words, half of the whole is half of the Whole.

not always mean ‘ten units of one thousand’, nor does it mean, say, ‘ten thousand units of ten thousand’ or ‘a hundred units of ten thousand’. ‘Buddha lands’ refers to what is inside our eyes.[4] When we see or hear the phrase ‘what illumines the Eastern Quarter’, if we study it as if it were some white band of cloth extending in just one direction across the eastern sky, this will not be a case of our exploring the Way through our training. The whole universe in all ten directions is, simply, the Eastern Quarter, so we call the Eastern Quarter ‘the whole universe in all ten directions’. On this basis, the whole universe in all ten directions exists. When the phrase ‘the whole universe in all ten directions’ is uttered, we hear the phrase ‘eighteen thousand Buddha lands’ being voiced.

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Emperor Hsien-tsung of the T’ang dynasty was the imperial father of two emperors, Mu-tsung and Hsüan-tsung, and was the grandfather of three emperors, Ching-tsung, Wen-tsung, and Wu-tsung. Once, when he requested that the ashes of the Buddha be brought to him so that he could make an alms offering to them, they gave off a light that illumined the night. The emperor was overjoyed. Early the next morning, his retainers and ministers all presented congratulatory letters which said, “It is the Saintly responding to His Majesty’s saintly virtue.”

> At that time there was a minister, Han Yu Wen-kung by name—he was also called Tui-chih. He was in the habit of exploring the Matter whilst sitting in the back row of the Buddhist Ancestors. Wen-kung alone did not offer a congratulatory letter. Emperor Hsien-tsung asked him, “All the other retainers and ministers have offered our royal presence a congratulatory letter. Why have you not done so?”
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> Wen-kung replied, “Your humble servant has seen in Buddhist writings that the Light of Buddha is not something blue or yellow or red or white, so the present light must simply be the glow from some guardian dragon.”
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> The emperor then asked, “Then what, pray tell, is the Buddha’s light like?”
>
> Wen-kung did not reply.

Now, even though this Wen-kung is said to have been just an ordinary fellow in lay life, nevertheless he had the spirit of a stout-hearted trainee in the Way who had the

4. That is, it refers to our own being when we look within ourselves.

ability to set the heavens and the earth a-spinning. Should any people undertake to explore the Matter through their training, this is the beginning attitude of mind that they should have. If they do not approach their study in this manner, they are apart from the Way. Even if flowers were to rain down upon them from the heavens when they were lecturing on the Scriptures, still their efforts would be in vain if they had not yet arrived at this principle in training. Even if they were among the 'thrice wise and ten times saintly',* if they were to keep their long tongues in their mouths the same as Wen-kung did his, that would be evidence of their giving rise to the desire to realize the Truth and of their giving rise to training and enlightenment.[5]

Be that as it may, there is something in Buddhist writings that you, Han Wen-kung, have still not encountered or heard about. How have you understood the saying, "The Light of Buddha is not something blue or yellow or red or white?" If you had the ability to grasp the fact that, when someone looks at a light that is blue, yellow, red, or white, it is not the Light of Buddha, then, when you see the Light of Buddha, you must refrain from considering It from the perspective of Its being something blue, yellow, red, or white. If Emperor Hsien-tsung had been a Buddhist Ancestor, he would have pursued the Matter in this way.

In short, the Light that is ever so clear is the luminosity of all the hundreds of things that sprout up like blades of grass, without anything being added to, or taken away from, their roots, stems, branches, leaves, fruit, glow, or color. There is the luminosity of the five paths, and there is the luminosity of the six paths.[6] Since these are the very places where the What exists, would that explain what light is and what brightness is? Surely, it must be describing how the great earth with its mountains and rivers suddenly came into existence. We need to explore in detail the saying by Master Chōsa that the whole universe in all ten quarters is our own brightness. We need to explore that Self which is the Brightness as being the whole universe in all ten quarters.

The coming and going of birth and death is the coming and going of one's brightness; going beyond the mundane and transcending the holy are the indigo and vermilion of that Brightness; becoming a Buddha and becoming an Ancestor are the black and yellow of that Brightness. Training and enlightenment are not apart from It, for they are what color the Brightness is. Grasses and trees, walls and

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5. Long tongues are representative of the ability to eloquently voice the Dharma.

6. 'The five paths' refers to the five worlds of existence: namely, that of celestial beings, humans, animals, hungry ghosts, and hells. The six paths are the five paths plus existence in the world of asuras.

fences, as well as skin, flesh, bones, and marrow are the scarlet and white of the Brightness. Smoke and mist, water and stones, as well as the path of birds and the hidden road, are the twists and turns of the Brightness. Experiencing one's own Brightness is the mutual encounter of meeting and recognizing a Buddha. The whole universe in all ten directions is one's true Self, and one's true Self is the whole universe in all ten directions—there is no place to escape to. Were there some way to escape this, it could only be by getting outside of our own physical body. Our present-day seven feet of skull and bones is precisely the form and image of the whole universe in all ten directions. Indeed, the whole universe in all ten directions which trains and enlightens us in the Buddha's Way is our skull and bones, our physical body with its skin, flesh, bones, and marrow.

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Great Master Ummon Bun'en was a descendant of the thirty-ninth generation from the World-honored Tathagata. He was the Dharma heir of Great Master Seppō Shinkaku. Even though he was a latecomer to training among the Buddha's followers, he is a hero within our Ancestral lineage. Who could assert that a luminous Buddha had never emerged on Mount Ummon?

> There was a time when Ummon entered the Dharma Hall and addressed his assembly, saying, "All human beings, without exception, have the Light within themselves. But when they look for It, they do not see It, for It is shrouded in the darkness of ignorance. Just what is this Light that everyone has within themselves?" There was no one in his assembly who gave a reply. Putting himself in their place, he said, "The Monks' Hall, the Buddha Hall, the Temple Kitchen, and the Gate to the Mountain."[7]

The present statement of the Great Master that all human beings, without exception, have the Light within themselves is not saying that It is something that will manifest at some time in the future, or that It was something that existed in some past generation, or that It is something that is fully manifesting Itself in front of some onlooker now. We need to clearly hear and remember his statement that all human beings, without exception, have the Light within themselves. This Light amasses hundreds of thousands of Ummons, helping them train together and say

7. 'The Gate to the Mountain' is a common term for the entrance to a monastery. The whole of Ummon's statement could also be translated as "the Monks' Hall, the Buddha Hall, and the Temple Kitchen as the gateways to the monastery."

the same thing as with one voice. Ummon is not dragging this statement out from himself: it is the brightness of all human beings that takes up the Light and speaks these words for the sake of everyone. "All human beings, without exception, have the Light within themselves" is equivalent to saying, "The whole of humanity itself is what has the Brightness." The Brightness is what all human beings are. Taking hold of this Brightness, they turn It into external conditions and internal tendencies. Thus, we can say, "The Brightness is what totally possesses all human beings," or "Each Light is each and every human being," or "All human beings, by nature, have within themselves each and every human being," or "Each moment of Light, by nature, contains every moment of Light," or "Each instance of possession totally possesses every instance of possession," or "Each moment of totality contains every moment of totality." So, be aware that the Brightness that each human being completely possesses is what every human being fully manifests, and the Brightness is each individual human being, which each individual brightness completely possesses.

Now, I would like to ask Ummon, "What is it that you are calling 'each and every human being'? What is this thing you call 'Light?'" Ummon himself had said, "Just what is this Light that everyone has within themselves?" This question is the very brightness itself, and any doubt will kill the conversation. Even so, when such a matter is being raised, every human being that is present will be an individual instance of Light.

At the time, there was no one in his assembly who gave a reply. Even though they all had hundreds of thousands of answers, they spoke by means of not making a reply. This condition is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, which is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, and which all the Buddhas and Ancestors authentically Transmit.

> Ummon, putting himself in the place of his assembly, said, "The Monks' Hall, the Buddha Hall, the Temple Kitchen, and the Three Gates."[8]

8. From this point on in the discourse, Dōgen cites the Gate to the Mountain by an alternative name: the Three Gates (both names are read as *sammon* in Japanese). This shift in names carries an implication that each person who undertakes the training (enters the Gate to the Monastery) encounters the three principle areas of life in a monastery: the Monks' Hall (where one does meditation), the Buddha Hall (where one hears the Teaching), and the Temple Kitchen (where one carries out the ordinary tasks of everyday life). Since these areas of activity are also going on within the trainee, to that extent the trainee is the Monastery. In

The present statement, "putting himself in the place of," means putting himself in the place of Ummon, putting himself in the place of his great assembly, putting himself in the place of the brightness, and putting himself in the place of the Monks' Hall, the Buddha Hall, the Temple Kitchen, and the Gate to the Monastery. But what did Ummon mean by referring to the Three Gates of the Monks' Hall, the Buddha Hall, and the Temple Kitchen? We ought not to call a great assembly, along with every human being in it, the Three Gates of the Monks' Hall, the Buddha Hall, and the Temple Kitchen. After all, how many Three Gates of the Monks' Hall, Buddha Hall, and Temple Kitchen are there? Should we regard them all as Ummon? Or as the Seven Buddhas?* Or as the twenty-eight Indian Ancestors? Or as the first six Chinese Ancestors? Or as the Fist? Or as the Nose? Even though the Three Gates of the Monks' Hall, Buddha Hall, and Temple Kitchen are, so to speak, any Buddha or Ancestor, Buddhas and Ancestors are persons who do not escape from being human beings. And they go beyond just being 'a human being'. Once they have become 'such a one',* there are instances where there are Buddha Halls that have no Buddha and where there are no Buddha Halls that lack Buddha. There are Buddhas who have luminosity and there are Buddhas who do not have luminosity. There is a luminosity without Buddha and there is a luminosity with Buddha.

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Great Master Seppō once addressed his assembly, saying, "I have fully recognized you all before the Monks' Hall." This was said at a time when Seppō's whole being, through and through, was his Eye. It was an occasion when Seppō caught a glimpse of the true Seppō. It was a Monks' Hall recognizing a Monks' Hall.

Hōfuku, alluding to his Master's remark, asked Gako,[9] "Putting aside his 'before the Monks' Hall' for the moment, where is it that Bōshū Pavilion and Useki Peak recognize each other?"[10] Thereupon, Gako sped back to the Abbot's quarters, whereas Hōfuku straightaway entered the Monks' Hall. In the present instance, the one's returning to the Abbot's quarters and the other's entering the Monks' Hall are both ways of expressing their having left self behind. It is a

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this sense what Ummon is saying could be translated as "The Monks' Hall, the Buddha Hall, and the Temple Kitchen are the Three Gates."

9. Hōfuku and Gako were two of Seppō's disciples.

10. Bōshū Pavilion and Useki Peak are two scenic places on Mount Seppō that were used as meditation sites.

principle based on mutual recognition. It is two Monks' Halls mutually recognizing each other.[11]

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Great Master Jizō Keichin once said, "The Chief Cook has entered the Kitchen Hall." This expression of his has put the Matter before the Seven Buddhas.

Delivered to the assembly at Kannondōri Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on a summer night during the fourth period of the third watch of the second day of the sixth lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (about 2:00 A.M., July 1, 1242). At that time during the wet season, the rain was pouring down, the drops gushing off the eaves. Where was the brightness to be found then? My great assembly has still not escaped from having been pierced to the heart by what Ummon said.

Copied by me in the office of the Abbot's assistant at Daibutsu-ji Temple in Echizen Province on the third day of the twelfth lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (January 1, 1245).

Ejō

11. That is, both having awakened to the Truth and having recognized this awakening in each other, the one goes to the Abbot's quarters (a symbolic Bōshū Pavilion) for spiritual confirmation and instruction, and the other goes to the Monks' Hall (a symbolic Useki Peak) to continue his training through meditation.

36

On Learning the Way Through Body and Mind

(Shinjin Gakudō)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse, the Japanese word *shin* is most often rendered as 'mind'. However, there are places where the reference is clearly to 'heart' or to 'intention' (what one has in mind), and it has been translated accordingly.

You cannot realize the Buddha's Way if you do not aim to practice the Way, and It will be ever more distant from you if you do not aim to study It. Meditation Master Nangaku Ejō once said, "It is not that your training and enlightenment are absent, but they must not be tainted with anything." If we do not study the Buddha's Way, then we will lapse into the ways of non-Buddhists or those who are immoral. This is why former Buddhas and later Buddhas all invariably trained in, and practiced, the Buddha's Way.

There are provisionally two ways to learn what the Buddha's Way is: namely, to learn by means of our mind and to learn by means of our body. To learn by means of the mind is to learn by all sorts of minds. Those minds include the discriminative mind, the mind of feelings and emotions, and the mind that sees the oneness of all things, among others. Also, after we have established a spiritual rapport with a Master and have given rise to the mind that would realize full enlightenment, we take refuge in the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors and explore the daily functioning of the mind that seeks full enlightenment. Even if we have not yet given rise to the mind that truly aspires to realize full enlightenment, we should imitate the methods of the Buddhas and Ancestors of the past who gave rise to the mind that seeks enlightenment. This mind is the mind that has resolved to realize enlightenment; it is the manifestation of a sincere heart moment by moment, the mind of previous Buddhas, our everyday mind, and the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form. All of these are the products of our mind alone.

Sometimes we learn the Way by casting aside these various minds, and sometimes we learn the Way by taking them up. Thus, we learn the Way by thinking about these minds, and we learn the Way by not thinking about them. Sometimes a kesa* of gold brocade is forthwith Transmitted and duly accepted.[1]

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* See *Glossary.*

Sometimes there is Bodhidharma's saying, "You have gotten what my marrow is," followed by standing in place after making three full prostrations.[2] There is learning Mind by means of mind, which is the Transmitting of a kesa to the one who pounded rice.[3] To shave one's head and dye one's robes is nothing other than to turn one's heart around and illumine one's mind. To scale the castle walls and enter the mountains is to leave one frame of mind behind and enter another.[4] That a mountain monastery is being entered means that whatever one is thinking about is based on not deliberately thinking about some particular thing.[5] That the worldly life is being abandoned means that what one is specifically thinking about is not the point. To fix one's gaze upon these thoughts is comparable to two or three rounded heaps: to play around with these thoughts in spiritual ignorance is comparable to myriad thousands of sharp edges. When we learn in this manner what the Way is, appreciation will naturally come from our making efforts, but efforts do not necessarily proceed from already having appreciation. Even so, to borrow unseen the Nostrils of an Ancestor of the Buddha and let them expel one's Breath, and to use the hooves of a donkey or a horse and let them stamp the seal* of one's awakening, these have been signposts of the Way for tens of thousands in the past.[6]

In short, the great earth with its mountains and rivers, along with the sun, moon, and stars, are the very stuff of our mind. So, right at this very moment, what sort of thing is appearing before our very eyes? When we speak of the great earth

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1. This is an allusion to a Zen Buddhist traditional account that Shakyamuni, when dying, gave His gold brocade kesa to Makakashō as proof of Transmission.
2. This is a reference to the Mind-to-Mind Transmission from Bodhidharma to his disciple Taiso Eka.
3. A reference to the Mind-to-Mind Transmission from Daiman Kōnin to Daikan Enō, which was accompanied by passing on the kesa that Bodhidharma had originally brought with him to China.
4. An allusion to Prince Siddhārtha's leaving his life in his father's palace behind and entering the mountains to seek the Way.
5. An allusion to a kōan story concerning Meditation Master Yakusan, recounted by Dōgen in Discourse 26: On Wanshi's 'Kindly Advice for Doing Seated Meditation' (*Zazen Shin),* pp. 335–338.
6. 'Nostrils' refers to one's Buddha Nature, which is as plain as the nose on one's face. 'The hooves of a donkey' refers to one's commitment to plodding on, doing one's daily training to clean up one's karma. 'The hooves of a horse' refers to one's commitment to galloping on, going wherever necessary to help all sentient beings realize the Truth.

with its mountains and rivers, the mountains and rivers, for instance, will refer to some mountain and some flowing water: but 'the great earth' is not limited to just this place where we are now.

Mountains are also of many types. There are great Mount Sumerus and there are small Mount Sumerus. There are those that lie horizontally and there are those that rise vertically. There are those within three thousand worlds and there are those in innumerable countries. There are those that depend on their form and there are those that depend on empty space.

Rivers likewise are of many types. There are celestial rivers and there are earthly rivers. There are the four great rivers and there is Lake Anavatapta from which they flow. There are the four Anavatapta lakes in the northern continent of Uttarakuru, and there are oceans, and there are ponds.[7]

'The earth' does not necessarily refer to land, and land does not necessarily refer to 'the earth'. The earth can refer to the land, and it can refer to the ground of our mind, and it can refer to earth that is treasured, such as a monastery. Though we say that earth is what all things are, this will not negate the concept of 'earth', for there may be worlds in which space is viewed as 'earth'.

There are differences in the way that the sun, moon, and stars are viewed by humans and celestial beings, since all their various viewpoints are not the same. Because this is the way things are, the perspectives of our whole mind function as one. These perspectives are already what our mind is. So, should we treat the great earth with its mountains and rivers, the sun, the moon and the stars as being within us or outside us, as arising or as departing? When we are born, is one speck of something added to us? At death, does one mote of something depart from us? Where are we to find this birth-and-death, along with our views about it? Up to the present, they have been just one moment of the mind and then a second moment of the mind. One moment of the mind and then a second moment of the mind is one great earth with its mountains and rivers and then a second great earth with its mountains and rivers. Since such things as the great earth with its mountains and rivers are beyond a matter of existing or not existing, they are beyond being large or small, beyond being acquirable or not acquirable, beyond being directly knowable or not being directly knowable, beyond being penetrable or not being penetrable, and they do not change in accordance with our having awakened or not.

You should definitely accept as true that what we call 'learning the Way through mind' is the mind, as it has just been described, accustoming itself to

7. Lake Anavatapta is traditionally said to be in Tibet, and is considered the source of the four major rivers of India. In Indian cosmology, there are four continents surrounding Mount Sumeru, which is considered the center of the universe. Uttarakuru is the northern continent.

learning the Way. This truth goes beyond anything's 'being large or small' or 'existing or not existing'. Our learning of the Way is described in one Scripture as, "Knowing that a home is not our Home, we abandon our home, leaving home life behind in order to become a monk." This is beyond any measure of size, beyond any measure of proximity. It is beyond all the Ancestors from first to last, and it is even beyond a Master who has gone beyond Buddhahood by helping others to realize Buddhahood. There is verbally expounding upon the Matter* as being 'seven feet or eight feet'.[8] And there is actually embarking for the Other Shore, which is done for the sake of both oneself and others. This is what learning the Way is. Because learning the Way is as this, the tiles* and stones of our walls and fences constitute our very mind. Further, our learning the Way is beyond such sayings as "The three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form, and these alone, are what constitute the mind," or "The whole universe, and this alone, is what constitutes the mind. It is the tiles and stones of our walls and fences." What was nurtured in the years before the Chinese Hsien-tung era (860-873) broke down in the years after the Chinese Hsien-tung era.[9] To learn the Way is our 'slogging through the mud and being drenched in the water'[10] and our 'binding ourselves without a rope'.[11] It is our having the ability to draw forth the Pearl and the skill to enter the Water for It. There will be the day when this Pearl dissolves, and there will be times when It is smashed to pieces, and there will be times when It is crushed to bits. We do not consider ourselves as being equal with those who are the pillars* of the temple, nor do consider ourselves to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with those who are as stone lanterns.* Because things are as they are, we learn the Way by running barefoot and we learn the Way by doing somersaults.[12] And who among you will fix your eyes upon It and look? For each and every one of us, there is our going forth in accordance with whatever circumstances arise. At such a time,

8. That is, after having awakened to the Truth, one employs skillful means, which are adjusted to whatever situation arises, without becoming fixed to only one way of responding.

9. An allusion to a remark made by the tenth-century Meditation Master Sōzan Honjaku who, along with his Master Tōzan Ryōkai, is credited with founding the Sōtō Zen lineage. The remark refers to his level of understanding early in his training as being superficial and to his understanding later as having gone beyond understanding.

10. A common Zen Buddhist phrase describing a monk's willingness to help others no matter what he or she may need to go through.

11. An allusion to keeping to the Precepts without feeling bound up by them.

12. This sentence describes how we learn, namely, by being willing to stumble on, stepping on all manner of things, and by being willing to be tossed head over heels, physically, mentally, and spiritually.

because our walls are falling down, this helps us to learn that the ten directions are open to us, and because there are no gates, this helps us to learn that we are not kept from going anywhere.

As to the phrase, 'the mind that has resolved to realize enlightenment', this mind sometimes arises in a life-and-death situation, sometimes in the serenity of nirvana, and sometimes under other conditions. It does not depend on any place, and it is not obstructed by any place where it arises. The intention to seek enlightenment does not arise from any particular set of conditions and it does not arise from the intellect. It arises from the intention to seek enlightenment. In fact, it is the intention that seeks enlightenment. The intention that gives rise to seeking enlightenment is beyond existing or not existing, beyond the judgmental realm of 'good or evil', and beyond moral indifference. It is not something that arises as an effect from some previous life, nor is it something that beings in lofty worlds can always realize. It is simply the arising of the intention to realize enlightenment at that moment in time. Because it is not concerned with external circumstances, at the very moment when this intention to seek enlightenment arises, the whole universe, through and through, also gives rise to the intention to seek enlightenment. Though it is said that this arising seems to turn external circumstances around, the intention to seek enlightenment is something that these circumstances do not recognize. The arising of this intention is like both self and other stretching out their hands to each other. And we ourselves stretch out our hands as go forth amidst beings who are alien to us. We give rise to the intention to realize enlightenment even within the worlds of the hells, the hungry ghosts,* the animals, and the asuras.*

As to the phrase, 'the manifestation of a sincere heart moment by moment', at all moments we manifest a sincere heart. And we do it not for one or two moments, but moment by moment.

The leaves of a lotus are round in their roundness
And their roundness resembles a mirror:
The spines of a water chestnut are sharp in their sharpness
And their sharpness resembles an awl.

We speak of the leaves resembling a mirror, but they are so just moment by moment; we speak of the spines resembling an awl, but they are so just moment by moment.

As to the phrase ‘the mind of previous Buddhas’:

> A monk of long ago once asked National Teacher Echū, “Just what is the mind of previous Buddhas?”
>
> The National Teacher responded, “The tiles and stones of our walls and fences.”

Since this is so, you need to realize that the mind of previous Buddhas is beyond the tiles and stones of Their walls and fences, and ‘the tiles and stones of Their walls and fences’ goes beyond what is called ‘the mind of previous Buddhas’. This is how we learn what the mind of previous Buddhas is.

When we want to understand what ‘mind’ is, be it in this world or some other world, it is simply our everyday mind. Yesterday departs from this place and today comes from this place. When yesterday departs, the whole of the heavens departs, and when today comes, every bit of the earth comes: this is our everyday mind. Our everyday mind opens and closes within these confines. Because a thousand gates and ten thousand doors open or close at any one time, they are what ‘everyday’ is.

Now, ‘the whole of the heavens’ and ‘every bit of the earth’ are like forgotten phrases, like some voice gushing up out of the ground. The phrases are equal, the minds are equal, and the Teachings are equal. Our living and our dying die out in every moment, but we are ever ignorant of what preceded this latest body of ours. Though we are ignorant, if we give rise to the intention to seek enlightenment, we are undoubtedly advancing along the road to enlightenment. Already we have established this place, and there is no doubt about it. And we already have doubts about it, which is what being ‘everyday’ is.

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The phrase, ‘learning the Way through the body’, means that we learn the Way by means of the body, that we learn the Way by means of our living flesh. Our Body comes from our learning the Way, and what has come from our learning the Way is our body along with our Body. The whole universe in all ten quarters is synonymous with our one real physical body, and the coming and going of birth and death is also synonymous with our real physical body. We train with this body when we part company with the ten evils, hold to the eight Precepts, take refuge in the Three Treasures, and give up our homes, leaving home life behind to become a monk—this is to truly learn the Way. Thus we speak of this as ‘our true human body’. By all means, those of us learning in these later times must not hold to the same opinions as those non-Buddhists who deny causality.

Meditation Master Hyakujō Daichi once said, "If you hold to the opinion that we are Buddhas by nature and are already in the Way of Meditation because we are innately immaculate and innately enlightened, then you belong among those non-Buddhists who deny causality." Unlike broken tools in a vacant house, these words of his are the product of his merits and virtues accumulated through his learning the Way. Having leapt beyond the opposites, he is brilliantly clear in all aspects; having let everything drop away, he is like wisteria that no longer depends on a tree for its support.

Sometimes those who learn the Way manifest in their own bodily form in order to help rescue others by giving voice to the Dharma, and sometimes they manifest in another bodily form in order to help rescue others by giving voice to the Dharma, and sometimes they do not manifest in their own bodily form in order to help rescue others by giving voice to the Dharma, and sometimes they do not manifest in another bodily form in order to help rescue others by giving voice to the Dharma, and so on, going so far as to not give voice to the Dharma in order to help rescue others. At the same time, when someone gives up their body and then raises their voice to proclaim the Dharma, there is something that silences all other voices. And by putting one's life on the line, there is something that will get to the Marrow when one opens one's hara.[13] Even if you had taken your first steps in learning the Way before the time of the Lords of Awe-inspiring Voices in the ever so distant past, you would have developed even further if you had been Hyakujō's own children and grandchildren.

'The whole universe in all ten quarters' means that each of the ten quarters is the whole universe. East, west, north, south, plus northeast, southeast, northwest, and southwest, along with the zenith and the nadir, are what we call the ten quarters. We need to consider the occasions when their front and back, length and width, are thoroughly whole.[14] What we call 'considering' means clearly seeing and determining that, even though it is said that our human body is restricted by 'self and other', nevertheless it is the whole of the ten quarters. We hear in this

13. 'Opening the hara to get to the Marrow' refers to a certain spiritual experience that may occur when someone's meditative mind is focused on the hara, which is the area just above the navel. This is sometimes represented by a picture of a monk—or an arhat—pulling open the hara to reveal within Something that is variously described as a Golden Buddha, the Child of the Lord, or the Embryo of Buddha (Skt. *Tathāgatagarbha*).

14. In other words, front and back, and length and width are not separate from each other, nor are they separate from the whole universe. Just as you cannot have a front without a back, so you cannot have anything that is somehow independent of the whole universe.

expression something that has not been heard before, due to its implications that the ten quarters are equal to each other and that the universe is equal to itself.

A human body is composed of four elements* and five skandhas.* Its four elements and its six sense organs, all together, are not something thoroughly understood by ordinary, worldly people, but they are something that saintly people have thoroughly explored through their training. Further, we need to clearly see the ten quarters within a single dust mote, and it is not that the ten quarters are all packed up in one sack.[15] Sometimes, the Monks' Hall and the Buddha Hall are erected within a single mote of dust, and sometimes the whole universe is erected in the Monks' Hall and the Buddha Hall, for it is from these Halls that the universe has been built. The principle of this is that the universe in all ten quarters is our real Body. Do not follow erroneous views that deny causality. Since the universe is beyond measure, it is beyond being wide or narrow. The universe in all ten quarters is the eighty-four thousand skandhas that give expression to the Dharma, the eighty-four thousand meditative states, and the eighty-four thousand invocations. The eighty-four thousand skandhas that give expression to the Dharma are the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma, and the place where the Wheel of the Dharma turns spans the whole universe and spans all time. It is not a place without directions or boundaries: it is our real Body. You and I, right now, are human beings who are the real Body of the whole universe in all ten quarters. We learn the Way without ever making a mistake about such things. We go on, discarding one body and receiving another, for three great asamkhyeya eons, or thirteen great asamkhyeya eons, or immeasurable asamkhyeya eons,[16] during which time, without fail, we learn the Way. We learn the Way by now stepping forward, now stepping back. Our respectfully bowing, with hands in gasshō,* is our everyday behavior of walking and standing still. In our painting a picture of a withered tree, or in our polishing a tile made of dead ashes, there is not the slightest break. Though our days, as they say, are short and swift in their passing, our learning the Way is profound and far-reaching. So, even though the demeanor of those who have abandoned their homes and left home life behind to become monks may seem bleak, do not confuse them with woodcutters. And even though their lives may seem a struggle, they are not the same as farmers working in rice fields. So, do not compare them by discussing whether they are deluded or enlightened, or good or bad; do not pursue such questions as "Are they false or true?" or "Are they genuine or fake?"

15. That is, there is no inside or outside of them.

16. 'Asamkhyeya' is a Sanskrit term of measurement for something that is experienced as being interminably long, but which simply takes as long as it takes.

When people speak of living and dying, coming and going, as being what the real human body is, they use the words 'living and dying' to describe the wandering of ordinary, worldly people lost in samsara as well as to describe what the great saintly ones have escaped from. But this does not mean that going beyond the ordinary and transcending the holy are simply to be considered as 'our real Body', for life and death come in two kinds and in seven kinds.[17] At the same time, because each and every one of these kinds, when thoroughly understood, is totally life-and-death, there is nothing that we need fear. And the reason why we need not fear life and death is that even before we have abandoned this life, we are already encountering death in the present. And even before we have abandoned death, we are already encountering life in the present. Life is not something that stands in the way of death, and death is not something that stands in the way of life. Neither life nor death are understood by ordinary, worldly people. Life may be likened to an oak tree in its growing; death may be likened to an iron man in its immobility. Though oak trees are restricted to being oak trees, life is never restricted by death, which is why we take up learning the Way. Life is not one sort of thing, and death is not another, second sort of thing. Never does death stand against life: never does life stand against death.

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Meditation Master Engo once said:

> *Life fully manifests its function*
> *And death fully manifests its function as well,*
> *All within the limits of Great Unbounded Space,*
> *For they are both the moment-by-moment manifestations*
> *of a sincere heart.*

We need to do our utmost to tranquilly consider these words of his. Although Meditation Master Engo spoke these words, he still had not recognized that life and death are beyond the scope of their functions. When exploring 'coming and going' through our training, there is life-and-death in going, and there is life-and-death in coming. There is coming-and-going in life, and there is coming-and-going in death. With the whole universe in all ten directions as its two or three wings, coming-and-going flies off and flies back, and with the whole universe in all ten directions as its three or five feet, coming-and-going steps forward and steps back. With life-and-death as Its head and tail, the real Body, which is the whole universe in all ten

17. There are various listings of the two and seven kinds of life and death, all of which describe different perspectives on how life and death function.

directions, can reverse Itself and turn Its head around.[18] In reversing Itself and turning Its head around, It may look the size of a penny, or It may resemble the inside of a tiny mote of dust. The flat level ground is a precipitous cliff rising a thousand feet high. And the precipitous cliff rising a thousand feet high is the flat level ground. This is why there is the look of the southern continent and the look of the northern continent; by examining these, we learn the Way.[19] There is the Bones and Marrow of 'being beyond deliberately trying to think about something and being beyond deliberately trying not to think about anything'. Only by our resisting the tendency to deliberately manipulate our thinking do we learn the Way.

Delivered to the assembly at Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the double good fortune day (the ninth day of the ninth lunar month) in the third year of the Ninji era (October 3, 1242).

Copied by me on the second day of the beginning of mid-spring in the fourth year of the Ninji era (February 22, 1243).

Ejō

18. That is, just as our physical body can turn itself around and go a different way, so our minds can also turn away from delusion and toward enlightenment.

19. The southern continent of Jambudvipa is associated with the world of human beings who are capable of learning because they are aware of their suffering, whereas the northern continent of Uttarakuru is associated with the world of celestial beings who see no need to train because they are, at the moment, enjoying a constantly easy and blissful existence.

37

On a Vision Within a Vision and a Dream Within a Dream

(Muchū Setsumu)

Translator's Introduction: The Chinese character *'mu'* in the title of this discourse is read in Japanese as *'yume'*. When translated into English, this single character encompasses the meaning of both 'dream' and 'vision', the former term denoting an experience that occurs while sleeping and the latter referring to an experience that occurs while being awake. The Japanese employ only the single word *yume* for both experiences. Also, in Buddhism, the whole of life and all that exists in the universe is viewed as being as insubstantial and impermanent as a dream or a vision. According to Dōgen, this dream-vision is also a manifestation of the Truth, which we either see or do not see depending on whether we are spiritually awake or still spiritually asleep.

Because the Truth, which all the Buddhas and all the Ancestors have manifested in this world, is something that existed before any thoughts or things had sprouted up, It is beyond anything that those with false and empty notions argue over. Accordingly, within the bounds of the Buddhas and Ancestors there has been the meritorious activity of That which goes above and beyond Buddhahood. Because this meritorious activity is independent of any specific occasion, it will far outlast the life span of any living being —be it for a shorter or longer time—for it never ceases, and it will be far beyond any way of measuring to be found in the realm of ordinary folk.

Further, the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma is the standard for That which has existed since before any thoughts or things had ever sprouted up. Since the great merit of Its turning is beyond praise, It has served as a signpost and model in thousands of times past. Buddhas speak of this Wheel of the Dharma as being a vision from within a vision. Because They see what enlightenment is from within Their enlightenment, They give expression to Their vision from within Their vision.

The place from whence They are giving expression to Their vision from within Their vision is the domain of Buddhas and Ancestors: it is the assembly of Buddhas and Ancestors. The domain and assembly of Buddhas, as well as the pathways and Dharma assemblies of the Ancestors, are based on Their innate enlightenment giving rise to Their experience of enlightenment and on Their subsequently giving expression to the vision that They are experiencing within

Their vision. In encountering these sayings and expressions of Theirs, do not treat them as something apart from the Buddha's assembly, for They are Buddhas turning the Wheel of the Dharma. Because this Wheel of the Dharma encompasses everything in all directions, the Great Ocean, Mount Sumeru, all lands, and all thoughts and things have fully manifested themselves. This is the vision expressed within the vision, which existed prior to any dreams. All that manifests within the whole universe is but a dream. This dream consists of all the hundreds of things that sprout up ever so clearly. It is the very moment when we are about to give rise to doubt, the very moment when we are confused. This moment is, say, a sprouting up of the dream, a sprouting up within the dream, and a sprouting up that gives expression to the dream. In exploring this through our training, we find that the roots and stalks with their branches and leaves, and the blossoms and fruits with their lustrous colors and forms altogether comprise the great dream. And you must not confuse it with dreaminess.

Accordingly, when persons who have doubts about learning the Buddha's Way encounter the phrase 'a vision being expressed within a vision', they vainly imagine that it probably refers to dreaming up things that actually do not exist, or they suppose that it may be like piling delusion upon delusion. But this is not so. Even though one says that there is also delusion within delusion, by all means we need to thoroughly explore, with utmost effort, the path that penetrates through this expression to the comprehension of what is really meant by 'piling delusion upon delusion'.

'A vision expressed within a vision' is what all Buddhas are, and all Buddhas are 'wind and rain, water and fire'.[1] They accept and keep in mind the latter epithet and They accept and keep in mind the former epithet. 'A vision expressed from within a vision' is what the Buddha of old was. Riding within His treasured Vehicle,[2] He forthwith arrived at His sitting place, where He realized the Truth. 'Arriving at His sitting place, where He realized the Truth' is synonymous with 'His riding within His treasured Vehicle'. "No matter whether the vision of trainees is distorted or correct, the Master either grabs hold of their deluded certainty or lets them go on in their own way, as he himself gives free rein to his

1. That is, because Buddhas are beyond a personal self, They are a vision expressed within a vision, and when They express that vision, what They give voice to pours forth from Them like wind and rain, water and fire.

2. A reference to the One Vehicle, which derives from the *Lotus Scripture*. Dōgen discusses its meaning in detail in his Discourse 16: On 'The Flowering of the Dharma Sets the Dharma's Flowering in Motion' *(Hokke Ten Hokke)*, pp. 175-178.

elegantly skillful means."[3] At such moments, the Wheel of the Dharma sometimes sets into motion the realm of the great Dharma Wheel, which is beyond measure and beyond bounds. And sometimes It sets this realm in motion within a single dust mote, for even within a mote of dust, Its movement never ceases. The principle here is that no matter how the Dharma's being set in motion may bring about the experience of That Which Is, even the hostile will smile and nod. And because this setting of the Dharma in motion has brought about an experience of That Which Is, regardless of where this may occur, it is synonymous with setting elegantly skillful means in motion. As a result, all at once the whole earth is a limitless Dharma Wheel and the universe throughout is undisguised cause and effect. For Buddhas, these two realms are the ultimate. Keep in mind that the provisional instructions of Buddhas and the heaping up of Their voicings of the Dharma have established limitless ways of teaching by provisional means and have made limitless places in which the Dharma can abide. Do not look for limits to Their comings and goings. Completely relying on the Dharma, They come; completely relying on the Dharma, They go. Thus, Their planting kudzu and wisteria and Their letting the kudzu and wisteria entwine is the nature and form of supreme enlightenment.[4] Just as enlightenment is limitless, so sentient beings are limitless and supreme. Notwithstanding the fact that enticements and snares are limitless, letting them go is also limitless. When your spiritual question appears, it will yield thirty blows for you, which is the manifesting of a vision that is being expressed within a vision.

Thus, a rootless tree, an earth without opposites, and a valley that does not echo a shout are all manifest visions that are being expressed within a vision. This is not within the realm of ordinary people or those in lofty positions, nor is it what worldly folks take note of. The vision <u>is</u> enlightenment, so who could doubt it?—for it is not what is governed by doubt. And who could believe it?—for belief does not set it in motion. Because this supreme enlightenment <u>is</u> supreme enlightenment, we speak of it as a vision within a vision. There is the vision within and there is giving expression to the vision; there is the vision being expressed and there is one's being within the vision. Without being within a vision there is no expressing a vision, and without expressing a vision, there is no being within a vision. Without expressing a vision, there are no Buddhas, and without being within a vision, the Buddhas do not emerge into the world to turn the wondrous

3. A quotation from Dōgen's Master, Tendō Nyojō.

4. 'Planting kudzu and wisteria and letting them entwine' is descriptive of setting up a Master-disciple relationship and then letting the interdependence of Master and disciple grow.

Wheel of the Dharma. That Dharma Wheel refers to each Buddha on His own, just as it refers to all Buddhas and to the vision that is expressed from within a vision. It is only in that vision which is expressed from within a vision that Buddhas and Ancestors exist as a supremely enlightened multitude. Further, the experience of what lies beyond the Dharma Body is a vision that is expressed from within a vision. Herein is there homage for each Buddha alone, together with all Buddhas. They have no attachment to head or eye, marrow or brain, body or flesh, hand or foot. And because They have no such attachments, as an ancient one once said, "The one who is a seller of gold will be a buyer of gold." We call this 'the Profound of the profound' and 'the Wondrous of the wondrous' and 'the Enlightened of the enlightened' and 'the Head that rests upon the head'. This is nothing other than the everyday behavior of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

In exploring this Matter* through your training, some of you may think that what is being referred to as a 'Head' is merely something extraneous atop the crown of a person's head. But it may not have occurred to you that what is really atop the crown is Vairochana* Buddha. And even less may you think that It is the Head from which all the hundreds of things ever so obviously sprout up, to say nothing of knowing what the word 'Head' is pointing to. From ancient times, the phrase 'placing a Head upon a head' has habitually been handed down. Foolish people, on hearing this, think that this is merely a saying that warns against anything that is superfluous or excessive. They treat it as an everyday maxim by saying, "Why put a head atop a head?" to express that there is no need for something. Surely, this is a mistake. For, when giving expression to a vision from within a vision, there is no difference in how both worldly and saintly persons misuse the phrase 'placing a Head upon a head'. Thus, for both worldly and saintly persons, their giving expression to a vision from within a vision must have occurred in the past and must still extend to the present day. You need to realize that when it comes to their having expressed a vision from within a vision in the past, they customarily believed that they were expressing a dream from within a dream. And when it comes to their expressing of a vision from within a vision today, they still treat it as their expressing a dream from within a dream. This, accordingly, is what the joy in meeting a Buddha is all about. Even though the vision that the Buddhas and Ancestors have of all the hundreds of things which sprout up ever so clearly is more obvious than a hundred thousand suns and moons, how sad that those who are spiritually blind do not see It. What a pity![5]

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* See *Glossary.*

5. To paraphrase this complex passage, in the same way that people do not understand the

The ‘Head’ in the phrase ‘the Head that rests upon the head’ is the Head of a hundred sproutings, the Head of a thousand kinds of things, the Head of ten thousand varieties of things, the Head of one’s whole being, the Head that is the whole universe which has never been hidden, the Head that is the whole universe in all ten quarters, the Head that matches a phrase of Scripture, the Head that is the top of a hundred-foot pole. You should explore through your training, and do it thoroughly, that both ‘what is resting’ and ‘what is upon’ is the very Head of heads.

Thus it is that the saying from the *Diamond-cutting Scripture* that “Buddhas and the supreme, fully perfected enlightenment of Buddhas all come forth from this Teaching of Mine” is also expressing a vision from within the vision wherein the Head habitually rests upon the head. When this Teaching gives expression to a vision from within the vision, supreme enlightenment causes all Buddhas to come forth. And what is more, all Buddhas, being enlightened, give voice to this Scripture, which is, beyond doubt, Their expressing a vision from within the vision. Since the cause of the vision is not obscured, the result of the vision is not hidden from sight. It is simply a matter of one strike of a clapper making a thousand hits or ten thousand hits, or of a thousand strikes or ten thousand strikes making one hit or half a hit. Accordingly, you need to know that there is such a thing as giving expression to a vision from within the vision—one that involves the experiencing of That Which Is—and there are times when the one who gives expression to a vision from within the vision is ‘such a person’.* And there is the giving expression to a dream from within a dream—one that does not involve the experiencing of That Which Is—and there are times when the one who gives expression to a dream from within a dream is not ‘such a person’. And you need to know that the principle being recognized here is dazzlingly clear, namely, that giving expression all day long to a vision from within the vision is simply giving expression to a vision from within the vision. This is why a former Buddha once said, “For your sakes, I am now giving expression to the vision from within the vision. The Buddhas of the three periods of time—past, present, and future—all expressed the vision from within the vision and the first six Chinese Ancestral Masters also expressed the vision from within the vision.” You should clearly study these words.

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spiritual meaning of the phrase ‘placing a Head upon a head’, they also misunderstand the nature of their everyday experience. Rather than seeing the Buddha Nature within all the myriad things that exist, they only see the insubstantiality of all things. By viewing things in this one-sided way, they sadly miss the joy of meeting Buddha, until and unless they encounter ‘such a one’ who can explain the deeper spiritual significance of all that exists.

'Holding the flower aloft, with eyes atwinkle' is giving expression to the vision from within the vision, and 'respectful bowing securing for you the very Marrow of the Way' is also giving expression to the vision from within the vision.[6]

In sum, 'gaining the Way through a single verse of Scripture', as well as "I do not understand," and "I do not personally know that One," are all ways of expressing the vision from within the vision.[7] Because the Bodhisattva* of Great Compassion's making use of His ever so many hands and eyes is the same, His meritorious functions of 'seeing colors and seeing sounds' and of 'hearing colors and hearing sounds' are sufficient. Sometimes, one gives expression to the vision from within the vision by manifesting oneself in various forms to aid deluded beings. Sometimes, one gives expression to the vision from within the vision by giving voice to the Dharma over and over again. It is giving expression to the vision from within the vision when a Master grabs hold of the deluded certainty of his trainees or lets them go on in their own way. 'Pointing directly' is giving expression to the vision, just as 'hitting the target' is giving expression to the vision. Whether grabbing hold of the deluded certainty of one's trainees or letting them go on in their own way, you need to learn how to use an ordinary weighing scale. When you have learned this, then, beyond question, your ability to spot the difference between a pound and an ounce will emerge, and you will have your way of expressing the vision from within the vision.

If you have not yet reached equilibrium and are still arguing over how many ounces to a pound, you will not manifest balance. When you have achieved equilibrium, then you will see what balance really is. When you have completely achieved equilibrium, you will not depend on what is being weighed, or upon some scale, or upon the way a scale functions. You need to thoroughly explore that, even though you may rely on That which is as unbounded space, if you have not attained equilibrium, you will not see what balance is. When you yourself are relying on That which is as unbounded space, letting the objects you encounter float freely in

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6. 'Holding the flower aloft, with eyes atwinkle' is a reference to the Transmission of the Dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha to his disciple Makakashō. Dōgen explores the reference to 'respectful bowing' in his Discourse 10: On 'Respectful Bowing Will Secure for You the Very Marrow of the Way' *(Raihai Tokuzui)*.

7. 'Gaining the Way…' is an allusion to the Sixth Chinese Ancestor Daikan Enō, who awoke to the Truth upon hearing someone recite a single verse from the *Diamond-cutting Scripture*. "I do not understand [the Buddha's Teaching]" is also an allusion to Daikan Enō, whose understanding went beyond an intellectual understanding of Scripture. "I do not personally know that One" was Bodhidharma's reply to Emperor Wu's question, "And who, pray, is this one who is confronting my royal presence?"

space, it will be your giving expression to the vision from within the vision, and within that space you will physically manifest equilibrium. Balance is the great truth of a scale, whereon we weigh space and we weigh things. Whether it is space or an object being weighed, when you reach equilibrium, you will express the vision from within the vision.

There is nothing that is not a liberated expression of the vision from within the vision. 'Vision' is synonymous with the whole of the great earth, and the whole of the great earth is synonymous with equilibrium. Therefore, our endlessly turning our head and setting our brains in motion are nothing other than our accepting in trust and acting in devotion, by means of which we realize the vision within our dreams.

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Shakyamuni Buddha once said in verse,

The Buddha with His body all in gold
Was adorned with the marks of a hundred blessings.
His very existence was like a pleasant dream
In which He heard the Dharma and voiced It for the sake of all.

And in His dream He became a nation's king,
One who forsook palace and household,
As well as all desires for finer things,
To find, instead, a place to train for Truth.

Beneath the Bodhi tree
*He took His place upon the Lion's seat**
And sought the Truth for seven days
Before He reached the wisdom that He sought.

Having fully reached the Supreme Way,
He arose and turned the Dharma's Wheel,
Expressing Truth for the sake of all
As hundreds of thousands of millions of kalpas passed Him by.*

Beyond delusion is His wondrous Dharma
That helps all beings reach the Other Shore.
Then the day came when He entered nirvana
Like a lamp going out, its fuel spent.

If any in later times
Should express His peerless Dharma,
They too will reap great benefits
Like the meritorious virtues herein described.

By exploring through your training what the Buddha is saying in the present instance, you will fully realize what the assembly of all Buddhas is, for what He is saying is not a metaphor. The wondrous Dharma of Buddhas is simply that of each Buddha on His own, just as it is for all the Buddhas. Therefore, all things, both in a dream state and in an awakened one, are manifestations of the Truth. Within the awakened state, there is a turning of the heart, practice and training, enlightenment, and nirvana, and within the dreaming state there is likewise a turning of the heart, practice and training, enlightenment, and nirvana. The dream state and the awakened state—each is a manifestation of the Truth. They are beyond large and small, beyond superior and inferior.

At the same time, seeing or hearing a phrase like "And in His dream He became a nation's king," people in the past and present have mistakenly understood it to mean that, due to the influence of this foremost Dharma having been voiced, their own nighttime dreams will come true. Their understanding the phrase in this way means that they have not yet fully understood what the Buddha was Teaching. Dreaming and being awake have always been as one and the same, for they are both manifestations of the Truth. And even if the Buddha's Teaching were a metaphor, it would still be a manifestation of the Truth. And, as already stated, It is not a metaphor. What we create in a dream <u>is</u> the reality of the Buddha's Teaching. Shakyamuni Buddha, as well as all the Buddhas and Ancestors, have turned Their hearts around and done the training and practice, and They have alike achieved a genuine awakening, and all within a dream. Because this is so, what the Buddha said as Teaching for the present-day mundane world is nothing other than 'what we create within a dream'.

Seven days expresses a measure for how long it takes to attain the wisdom of a Buddha. Turning the Wheel of the Dharma to help sentient beings reach the Other Shore has already been described as the passing of hundreds of thousands of millions of kalpas, for we should not speculate on the speed with which time passes within a dream.[8]

8. That is, time is how we experience it rather than how it is measured by a clock. Therefore, the seeming length of a 'day' and the length of a 'kalpa' are variable.

The Buddha with His body all in gold
Was adorned with the marks of a hundred blessings.
His very existence was like a pleasant dream
In which He heard the Dharma and voiced It for the sake of all.

Clearly you must have realized from this that 'a pleasant dream' is what the Buddha is. There is the Tathagata's phrase "His very existence," for He was not just some hundred-year long dream. "Voicing It for the sake of all" was His manifesting Himself in various forms. "Hearing the Dharma" was the sound that was heard by His Eye, the sound that was heard by His Heart, the sound that was heard by the old habits that He abandoned like an empty nest, and the sound that was heard before time began.

The Buddha with His body all in gold
Was adorned with the marks of a hundred blessings.

This is saying that 'a pleasant dream' is the bodily existence of the Buddha, which is His forthwith having arrived at the Now and having doubts no more. Even though the instructions of the Buddha do not cease for someone who has awakened, the principle of the Buddhas' and Ancestors' complete manifesting is, of necessity, Their manifesting a vision from within a vision. Through your training, you need to explore what it means not to vilify the Buddha's Dharma. When you explore through your training what not vilifying the Buddha's Dharma means, the present words of the Tathagata will immediately come forth.

Given to the assembly on the twenty-first day of the ninth lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (October 16, 1242) in Yamashiro Province, Uji District, at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple.

Copying finished by me on the third day of the third lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (March 24, 1243).

The Abbot's Assistant Ejō

38

On Expressing What One Has Realized

(Dōtoku)

Translator's Introduction: While *'dōtoku'*, the key term in this discourse, can be translated in various ways, all point to the same matter, namely, the way in which someone expresses, often through words, what has been realized spiritually. This is different from experiencing a psychological insight or having an intellectual comprehension.

All the Buddhas and all the Ancestors express what They have realized. This is why the Buddhas and Ancestors, when singling out an Ancestor of the Buddha, invariably ask, "Can that person express their realization or not?" They ask this question with Their heart and mind, with Their body, with Their traveling staff and ceremonial hossu, and as a pillar of Their temple and as a stone lantern.[1] For those who are not Buddhas or Ancestors, the question does not arise. The matter of their expressing what they have realized does not arise because such a state does not exist for them.

Expressing what one has realized is an ability that is not to be had by keeping in step with other people, nor is it some innate talent; simply, whenever trainees thoroughly practice the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors, then they will be able to express what Buddhas and Ancestors have realized. While expressing Their realization for others, the Buddhas and Ancestors of the past continued Their training and practice, and thereby thoroughly awoke to the Way. In the present, we should also do our meditation wholeheartedly and do our utmost to practice the Way. When Ancestors of the Buddha wholeheartedly do the meditation of Buddhas and Ancestors and undertake to put into practice the Truth that the Buddhas and Ancestors have expressed, Their expression of what They have realized represents the effort of three years, or eight years, or thirty or forty years, as They express what They have realized with all Their might.

Within these time spans, however many decades long they may have been, there has been no disparity in how 'such a one'* has expressed what he or she has realized. Thus, when you become fully awake, what you will realize through your

1. Please see the *Glossary* for the symbolic meanings of the last four terms in this sentence.

* See *Glossary.*

direct encounter with It will be the Truth. Because this encounter confirms as true the direct encounters of former times, when we now express what we have realized, it is beyond doubt. Thus, our expressing what we have realized in the present is supported by That which we directly met with in former times, and we support That which we directly met with in former times by expressing our realization today. This is why we can now express what we have realized, for we have personally met with It through our own experience. The expression of our realization in the present and our direct seeing in the past are as a single iron bar whose ends are ten thousand miles apart.[2] Our present efforts are directed by what we have realized of the Way and by what we have personally encountered.

We pile up long months and many years of keeping to these efforts, and what is more, we cease to cling to our past efforts over the months and years. When we attempt to let go, our skin, flesh, bones, and marrow alike strive to let go. And along with them, the land we live in with its mountains and rivers also strives to let go. At this time, while we are striving to let go so that we may arrive at the Ultimate Treasured Place, our effort to arrive fully comes forth, and, as a result, at the very moment of letting go, we will spontaneously express our realization as it immediately manifests before our very eyes. Even though it is said to be beyond the power of our body and mind, we will, nevertheless, spontaneously express what we have realized. Once our realization has occurred, we see that it is not something curious or strange.

Be that as it may, when you use words to express what you have realized, you will leave unsaid whatever is inexpressible through words. Even if you can see that you have indeed expressed what you have realized, if you have not realized that not all things can be verbally expressed, then you will lack the look of the Buddhas and Ancestors, and you will lack the Bones and Marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors. As a consequence, how could Eka's expressing his realization by doing three prostrations before Bodhidharma and then standing silently in his place possibly be equaled by that bunch who are stuck on 'skin, flesh, bones and marrow'?[3] Furthermore, the understanding of that bunch who are stuck on 'skin,

2. That is, they are fundamentally one and the same, while appearing as if they were totally separate.

3. The allusion here is to what occurred with the four disciples of Bodhidharma, three of whom expressed their understanding of their Master's Teaching verbally, whereas Eka, the fourth, bowed to the Master whilst remaining silent. Each disciple, in turn, was described by Bodhidharma as having realized one of four attributes: the Master's Skin, the Master's Flesh, the Master's Bones, and the Master's Marrow. In the present context, Dōgen is alluding to the literal-minded who are stuck with the notion that 'Skin, Flesh, Bones, and

flesh, bones and marrow' does not even come close to Eka's understanding, as expressed by his doing three prostrations before Bodhidharma and then standing in his place, much less were any of that bunch equipped with what Eka had. Those whom we encounter right now as we do our practice amidst different kinds of sentient beings are just like those whom Eka encountered in the past as he did his practice amidst different kinds of sentient beings.[4] For us, there is a basis for our verbally expressing what we have realized and a basis for our not verbally expressing what we have realized. And for Eka, there was a basis for his verbally expressing what he had realized and a basis for his not verbally expressing what he had realized. And for that bunch, there is a 'self and other' in what they say and a 'self and other' in what they do not say.

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Great Master Jōshū Shinsai, in instructing his assembly, once said, "If you were to spend your whole life not leaving the monastery, sitting as still as a mountain and not saying a word for five or ten years, no one would call you a mute, and later on, not even the Buddhas would be your equal!"[5] Accordingly, when you reside in a monastery for five or ten years as the frosts of winter and the flowers of summer, time and again, pass you by, and when you esteem doing your utmost to practice the Way whilst spending your whole life without leaving the monastery even once, then your sitting as still as a mountain, which severs the roots of your dualistic thinking, will, before long, be an expression of your realization. Your walking, sitting, and reclining whilst not leaving the monastery will be instances of no one calling you a mute. Even though we do not know what our whole life will be like, if we make our lifetime one of not physically leaving the monastery, this will be our way of 'not leaving the monastery'. And what path

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Marrow' represent four spiritual states in ascending order of superiority, rather than recognizing that each of the four disciples had obtained the substance of Bodhidharma's Teaching.

4. 'Doing one's practice amidst sentient beings" is a Zen Buddhist phrase referring to helping sentient beings reach the Other Shore, particularly those sentient beings whose perception of things is alien to the Buddhist Way.

5. Throughout this text, the word 'monastery' can be understood literally as referring to the physical place where trainees come in order to train together and figuratively as one's place of training, which is wherever one does the practice.

   In the present context, the Zen Buddhist term '*akan'*, translated here as 'a mute', refers to a thoroughly inexperienced trainee who is unable to say even a word in response to a Master's question.

through the trackless sky could one traverse in order to go beyond such terms as ‘our whole life’ and ‘a monastery’? So, simply strive to sit as still as a mountain, and do not speak of ‘not expressing It through words’. ‘Not expressing It through words’ is a way of expressing It that is correct from beginning to end.

Sitting as still as a mountain is for a whole lifetime, or for two whole lifetimes: it is not just for one or two occasions. When you have spent five or ten years in sitting as still as a mountain without saying a word, even the Buddhas will not think lightly of you. Truly, when you are sitting as still as a mountain without saying a word, even the Eyes of Buddhas will be unable to catch a glimpse of you, and even the strength of a Buddha will be unable to make you sway. At such a time, even the Buddhas will be unable to equal you.

Jōshū said that the expression ‘sitting as still as a mountain’ is beyond anything that even the Buddhas would call ‘being a mute’, and it is also beyond anything that They would call ‘not being a mute’. Accordingly, a whole life spent without leaving the monastery is a life spent wholly expressing what one has realized. Sitting as still as a mountain without saying a word for five or ten years is synonymous with expressing what one has realized for five or ten years. It is a whole life spent without departing from ‘not verbally expressing’ what one has realized, and it is a whole lifetime of five or ten years, and it is hundreds and thousands of Buddhas sitting to cut off Their dualistic thinking, and it is hundreds and thousands of Buddhas sitting to cut Themselves free from a ‘self’.

Thus, the basis of the Buddhas’ and Ancestors’ expressing Their realization is Their spending Their whole life in not leaving the monastery. Even if you were a mute, you would still have this as a basis for expressing what you have realized, so do not draw the conclusion that a mute cannot have a way of expressing what he has realized. The person who has a way of expressing what he has realized is not necessarily someone who is not a mute, since a mute, too, has his way of expressing what he has realized. You need to be able to hear His mute voice: you need to listen to His mute words. If you are not mute, how can you possibly meet with a Mute, or converse with a Mute? Given that That Person is as silent as a mute, how are we to meet with Him or converse with Him? Exploring the Matter* in this way, you should thoroughly put into practice being as silent as a mute.

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There was a monk in the assembly of Great Master Seppō Shinkaku who went just outside the mountain monastery and built himself a hermit’s thatched hut. Though the years accumulated, he did not shave his head. Who can know what

kind of life went on within that hut? As a rule, life within the mountains was depressing indeed.

He had fashioned a dipper out of wood and would go to the nearby ravine to get water for drinking. Truly, he must have been the sort who drinks from ravines. Consequently, as the days came and the nights passed, word of his customary habits leaked out, so that one day a monk came and asked him, "Why was it that the Ancestral Master Bodhidharma came here from the West?" The hermit replied, "Since the ravine is so deep, the handle of my dipper is long."

The inquiring monk was so dumbfounded that he left without bowing or asking the hermit for elucidation. Climbing back up the mountain, he recounted the event to Seppō. When Seppō heard the account, he said, "How wondrously strange! Even if it is as you say, this old monk will go and see for himself. By testing him, I'll get to the bottom of this, right off."

The heart of what Seppō said is that the merit of the hermit's remark was excellent, right up to the point of being wondrous, and even so, the old monk Seppō needed to go and see for himself. So, one day Seppō suddenly set off, asking his personal attendant to come along with a razor. He straightway arrived at the hermit's hut. No sooner had he spotted the hermit than he asked him, "If you can say what you have realized, should I not shave your head?"

We need to get to the heart of this question. "If you can say what you have realized, should I not shave your head?" can also be understood as "My not shaving your head means that you have a way of expressing the Matter," right? If the hermit's way of expressing what he has realized really did express the Matter, Seppō, in the last analysis, would not shave him. Those who have the capacity to hear this expression of the Matter need to listen, and should also clearly expound it for the sake of others who have the capacity to listen.

The hermit then washed his head and came before Seppō. Had he come as his way of expressing what he had realized or had he come as his way of not expressing what he had realized? Whichever the case, Seppō, accordingly, shaved the hermit's head.

This one episode is like the blossoming of an udumbara flower;[6] not only is it something rarely met with, it is rarely even heard about. It goes beyond the realm of the seven times saintly or the ten times saintly: it goes beyond what is glimpsed by the thrice wise or the seven times wise.* Those who are academic teachers of Scripture and writers of erudite commentaries, along with that bunch who crave mystical or magical powers, cannot fathom it at all. When we speak of

6. The udumbara flower is said to blossom only once in every three thousand years.

encountering the emergence of a Buddha into the world, we are speaking of hearing a story like this one.

Now, what could Seppō's remark, "If you can say what you have realized, should I not shave your head" really mean? When people who have not yet given expression to the Truth hear this story, those who are capable may be startled and doubt their ability, whereas those who are not yet capable may be completely bewildered. Seppō did not ask the hermit about 'Buddha', nor did he speak of 'the Way': he did not ask him about deep meditative states, nor did he speak of invocations.[7] Even though his inquiring as he did resembles asking a question, it is actually analogous to an assertion. You should explore this in detail through your training.

The hermit, though, had the look of the Genuine about him, so he could not help but give expression to the Dharma for the sake of others by his way of expressing what he had realized, and, as a result, he was not bewildered by Seppō's remark. He did not seek to go back into seclusion, as was his customary way, but washed his head and came forth. This is an expression of Buddha Dharma whose boundaries not even the wisdom of the Buddha Himself can reach. Expressing It can take the form of manifesting the Body, or giving voice to the Dharma, or rescuing sentient beings from their suffering, or washing one's head and coming forth.

Now then, if Seppō had not been the spiritually Real Person that he was, he would probably have thrown down the razor and burst out into gales of laughter. But Seppō had the essential spiritual strength and was that kind of Real Person, so he shaved the hermit's head. Truly, if Seppō and the hermit had not been 'Buddhas on Their own, together with all Buddhas', it could not have been like this; if they had not been 'one and the same Buddha, and also two Buddhas', it could not have been like this; if they had not been one dragon meeting another, it could not have been like this. The Black Dragon vigilantly guards the black pearl that He prizes so highly, and yet it naturally rolls into the hands of one who knows how to receive it.

Keep in mind that when Seppō tested the hermit, the hermit saw who Seppō really was. In expressing what was realized without saying what was realized, the one was shaved and the other did the shaving. Accordingly, there are pathways whereby good spiritual friends who express the Truth unexpectedly meet each

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7. Discussing 'Buddha' and 'the Way' refers to the intellectualizing of Buddhism by scholarly commentators and academic teachers of Scriptural texts, whereas deep meditative states and invocations are areas that those seeking magical powers are apt to get into. An invocation is a phrase having spiritual significance, which is sometimes chanted as part of a trainee's ceremonial practice.

other. And among friends who claim that they have not realized anything, there have been occasions when they have recognized the True Self, even though they had no expectations of doing so. When you undertake through your training to recognize the True Self, you will express what you have realized when It manifests before your very eyes.

Written down at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple and given to the assembly on the fifth day of the tenth lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (October 30, 1242). Composed and proofread by this mendicant monk.

Copied on the second day of the eleventh lunar month in the third year of the same era (November 25, 1242).

Ejō

39

On ‘A Picture of a Rice Cake’

(Gabyō)

Translator’s Introduction: In this discourse, Dōgen begins by exploring, from a literal perspective, the saying by Meditation Master Kyōgen Chikan that “A picture of a rice cake cannot satisfy one’s hunger.” In other words, a mental construct is no substitute for the direct experience of That Which Is. Also, knowing that suffering exists does not allay suffering. He then subtly turns this perspective around and shows how what we call a direct experience is shaped by how our mind depicts things.

Because all Buddhas are enlightened, all worldly beings are enlightened. Even so, Buddhas and worldly beings are not of one and the same nature or of one and the same frame of mind. Nevertheless, at the time when both manifest their enlightenment, the enlightenment of one does not inhibit the enlightenment of others. At the time when both manifest their enlightenment, they will manifest it without the two coming in contact with each other’s manifesting it. This is the forthright Teaching that is characteristic of our Ancestors. So do not hold up some measure of sameness or difference as the gauge of someone’s capacity to train. This is why it is said, “When we just barely comprehend what a single thing is, we comprehend what myriad things are.” What is spoken of here as ‘comprehending what a single thing is’ does not mean that we deny the appearance that some thing previously had, nor does it mean that we make one thing stand against another, nor does it mean that we treat some thing as absolute and unique. Treating some thing as absolute and unique is synonymous with treating it as an obstruction and then being obstructed by it. When our comprehension is freed from the obstruction of ‘I comprehend’, one instance of comprehension is equivalent to myriad instances of comprehension. One instance of comprehension is equivalent to a single thought or thing, and the comprehension of one thought or thing is synonymous with the comprehension of myriad thoughts and things.

A Buddha of old once said, “A picture of a rice cake never satisfies hunger.” Patch-robed novices who are seeking for a Master with whom to explore this

saying, as well as bodhisattvas* and shravakas* who have come hither from all directions, are not all uniform in reputation and rank. And this includes those having the head of a celestial being or the face of a demon, all of whom come hither from all directions, their hides thick or thin. Although they may say that they are studying what Buddhas of the past and present have said, they are actually spending their lives living under some tree or in a hermit's thatched hut. As a consequence, when they are at the point of passing on the traditions of our monastic family, some may refer to this statement about a rice cake by saying, "He said what He did because engaging in the study of the Scriptures and commentaries will not instill true wisdom." And there are others who may say, "He spoke this way because He was trying to say that studying the Scriptural texts on the three provisional vehicles* and the one True Vehicle* is, moreover, not the path to enlightenment." In both instances, this is their engaging in judgmental thinking.

Speaking more broadly, those who assert that provisional Teachings are completely useless are greatly mistaken. They have not had the meritorious behavior of Ancestors in our tradition genuinely Transmitted to them, so they are in the dark about the sayings of Buddhas and Ancestors. Since they have not clarified what this one saying is about, who could affirm that they had thoroughly explored the sayings of other Buddhas?

For instance, the saying "A picture of a rice cake never satisfies hunger" is like the saying from the *Āgama Scripture*, "Refrain from all evil whatsoever, and uphold and practice all that is good."[1] And it is like Daikan Enō's query, "What is It that has come about like this?" And it is like Tōzan Ryōkai's statement, "I am always eager here in this place." For the time being, you need to explore these statements in a similar manner through your training.

Folks who have encountered the expression 'a picture of a rice cake' are few, and none of them have fully delved into what it means. How do I know this? In my testing one or two smelly skin bags* in the past, they had reached neither the level of certainty nor even the level of uncertainty: they simply seemed indifferent, as if they were refusing to lend an ear to some neighbor's chitchat. You need to realize that what is called 'a picture of a rice cake' includes the appearance of what is born of "father" and "mother", as well as the appearance of what has not yet been born

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* See *Glossary*.

1. That is, the Precepts (refraining from evil, etc.) will alleviate suffering (hunger), but only so long as one is living by them and not just mouthing them.

of "father" and "mother".[2] At the very moment when a rice cake is actually made by using rice or wheat flour, without doubt, it is the moment when the reality of it manifests and the term for it is fulfilled. Do not explore through your training that a picture of a rice cake is something as trifling as our perception of the comings and goings of things. The 'colors' we use in 'painting a rice cake' will find their equivalents in the colors we use in painting a landscape. That is, in painting a landscape we use cerulean blue and earthen red pigments, and in painting a picture of a rice cake we use rice and wheat flour. Since, in both cases, the projects and the planning are equivalent, the materials we are using are also equivalent.

As a consequence, 'a picture of a rice cake' may refer to such things as a rice dumpling, a bean cake, a cake of tofu, a baked wheat cake, a fried rice cake—all of which arise from a picture we have drawn in our minds. You need to recognize that there are such things as pictures, cakes, and thoughts and things. Therefore, the cakes that are appearing in the here and now are all together 'pictures of rice cakes'. Should we seek for 'a picture of a rice cake' apart from this, ultimately we will never encounter it, for such a thing has never been thought up. Although a picture of a rice cake manifests at some one time, it does not manifest at some other time. Nevertheless, it lacks the characteristics of being old or young, and it leaves no traces of its coming and going. At the same time, nations and lands as 'pictured cakes' come forth and materialize here and now.

In the phrase 'will never satisfy hunger', 'hunger' does not refer to something that is under the sway of the twenty-four hours of a day. And, at the same time, when one encounters a picture of a rice cake, it is not some convenient thing, for even were we to sample a picture of a rice cake, ultimately it would fail to satisfy our hunger. There is no rice cake that depends on our being hungry. And because there is no rice cake that depends on there being rice cakes, the vigorous way of living fails to be transmitted, and the traditional ways of training are not passed on. Hunger is a monk's traveling staff.* Whether borne horizontally or vertically, it undergoes thousands of changes and myriad transformations. A rice cake is also one manifestation of body and mind, be it blue, yellow, red, or white, or long, short, square, or round.

Now, when we paint a picture of a landscape, we use cerulean blue, verdant green, and earthen red colors to depict awesome cliffs and strangely shaped rocks,

2. Not yet born of "father" and "mother" refers to the time before duality arises, whereas what is born of "father" and "mother" refers to the arising of dualistic thinking.

as well as making use of the seven treasures and the four treasures.[3] Managing the painting of a rice cake is also like this. When painting a human, we make use of the four elements* and the five skandhas;* when painting the Buddha, we not only make use of a clod of earth or mud, we also make use of His thirty-three auspicious characteristics, of a blade of grass, and of innumerable kalpas* of training and practice. Because depicting the Buddha in a scroll painting has always been like this, all Buddhas are depicted Buddhas and all depicted Buddhas are Buddhas. We need to investigate what a painted Buddha is and what a painted rice cake is. We need to explore in detail and with the utmost effort what a black turtle of stone is and what a monk's traveling staff of iron is, what a physical thing is and what a mental thing is. When we make such an effort, life and death, as well as coming and going, are simply drawings of a picture, as is, in a word, supreme enlightenment. In sum, neither the Dharma realms nor empty space are other than painted images.

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A Buddha of old once said in verse:

When I finally realized the Way,
The white snow, which had blanketed all in a thousand layers, departed
And, in my making a picture of this,
Blue-tinged mountains emerged on scroll after scroll.

This is talk about the great realization. It is His way of expressing that His having done His utmost to practice the Way had come to full fruition. As a consequence, at the very moment of His having realized the Way, He has created a picture, wherein He calls blue-tinged mountains and white snow 'scroll upon scroll'. Notwithstanding that, there is not a movement or a moment of stillness that is not part of His making a picture. Our own efforts to do our utmost at the present time are simply obtained from our own pictures. The ten epithets of the Buddha and the

3. In a mundane sense, 'the seven treasures' refers to various precious and semi-precious stones, as well to the seven treasures of a universal monarch, whereas 'the four treasures' refers to the four basic tools of a painter, namely, brush, ink, inkstone, and paper. On a spiritual level, 'the seven treasures' refers to the seven types of jewel trees that are to be found in the Pure Land, whereas 'the four treasures' refers to four divisions of the Scriptures: the Buddha's Teachings for all (the *Sutras*), His instructions for monastics (the *Vinaya*), the commentaries on the Buddha's Teachings (the *Shastras*), and the prayer-like invocations (the *Dharanis*).

three insights are 'scroll paintings'.[4] The five spiritual agents, the five spiritual powers, the seven characteristics of enlightenment, and the Noble Eightfold Path comprise 'scroll paintings'.[5] Were you to say that such pictures are not real, then all thoughts and things are also unreal. If thoughts and things are not real, then the Buddha Dharma is unreal. If the Buddha Dharma is real, then it follows that a picture of a rice cake must be real as well.

❀

Ummon Bun'en was once asked by a monk, "What would you call talk that goes beyond 'Buddha' and transcends 'Ancestor?'"

The Master replied, "A rice dumpling."[6]

We need to take our time to investigate this saying of his. Once a 'rice dumpling' has been brought into existence, there will be an ancestral Master who will speak out about "talk that goes beyond 'Buddha' and transcends 'Ancestor.'" And there are the 'trainees of iron will' who may not listen to him.[7] And there are novices who will listen because the Master has brought forth an expression of Dharma.

Now, Ummon's displaying the Matter* and hitting the bull's-eye by saying "a rice dumpling" are, to be sure, a couple of slices of a painted rice cake. And they

4. The ten epithets of the Buddha are 'The One Who Comes Thus', 'The One Worthy of Respect', 'The Self-enlightened One', 'The One of Perfect Conduct', The One Who is Well-gone', 'The Knower of the World', 'The Unsurpassed One', 'The Supreme Trainer of Those Who Can be Trained', 'The Teacher of Gods and Humans', and 'The Awakened One Who is the Refuge of the World'. The three insights are the recognition of impermanence, the recognition of no fixed, unchanging self, and the recognition of suffering.

5. The five spiritual agents are trust, zeal, reflection, contemplation, and wise discernment. The five spiritual powers destroy doubt by trust, negligence by zeal, falsity by reflection, confused or wandering thoughts by contemplation, and all illusions and delusions by wise discernment. The seven characteristics of enlightenment are being able to distinguish the true from the false, being undeflected from one's training and practice, being joyful, being rid of heaviness of mind, being at ease, being able to keep the mind focused, and not being thrown off by whatever arises.

6. The term 'a rice dumpling' is being used in Dōgen's discussion as a metaphor for a question that the intellect 'cooks up' to chat about.

7. Here, 'trainees of iron will' refers to those senior monks who hear the Dharma being voiced by a Master but have ceased to listen.

contain talk about going beyond 'Buddha' and transcending 'Ancestor', and they contain a pathway for entering Buddhahood or for entering demonhood.[8]

❀

My former Master once said, "Tall bamboo and plantain enter into the making of a picture."[9] This expression is one by which those who have gone beyond long and short have explored 'making a picture' through their training.

'Tall bamboo' is the Chinese name for what we in Japan call 'long-stemmed bamboo'. Although people say that bamboo is the result of an interplay of yin and yang, it is we who are setting 'yin and yang' in motion. Even so, there is the time of a tall bamboo, but that time cannot be measured in terms of yin and yang.[10] Even though great saintly ones may catch a glimpse of yin and yang, they cannot fathom what yin and yang really are. Because yin and yang together constitute the impartiality of thoughts and things, the impartiality of weights and measures, and the impartiality of words and ways, it is something beyond the yin and yang that the minds and eyes of non-Buddhists and those of the two Lesser Courses* depend on. It is the yin and yang of tall bamboo; it is the reckoning of the stages in the life of a tall bamboo; it is the world of tall bamboos. The Buddhas in all ten directions exist as the household of tall bamboos. You need to realize that the cosmos with its heavens and earths is the roots, stems, branches, and leaves of a tall bamboo. Therefore, it causes the cosmos with its heavens and earths to endure, and it causes Mount Sumeru within the Great Ocean, along with the whole universe in all ten directions, to have substantiality, and it causes a Master's traveling staff and lacquered bamboo bow to be both complete and not complete.[11]

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8. That is, Ummon's reply is fine as far as it goes, but if the disciple remains attached to concepts like 'Buddha' or 'Ancestor' or 'transcendence', then he has entered the path to demonhood rather than the one to Buddhahood, where all such concepts are dropped off.

9. Bamboo and plantain have long been used as subjects for both Chinese and Japanese paintings. Both have also been used as metaphors and carry various meanings. On the basis of the present quotation by Dōgen's Master, Tendō Nyojō, as well as Dōgen's discussion of it, bamboo is descriptive of the Master and plantain is descriptive of the trainee.

10. That is, the life of a Master cannot be measured by applying mundane, dualistic measures such as yin and yang.

11. The lacquered bamboo bow was entwined with a wisteria vine and was sometimes used by Zen Masters ceremonially in pointing to the Master-disciple relationship.

Plantain has earth, water, fire, wind, and space, as well as mind, will, consciousness, and wisdom. These are its roots, stems, branches, and leaves, along with the brightness of its flowers and fruit. So, when the winds of autumn envelop it and tear it, there is not a single mote of dust that remains on it. It can doubtless be described as pure and clean, for there is no sinew or bone within its core, nor any glue or other sticky substance upon its form. Liberation is its goal. Further, since it is not clinging to immediacy, it is beyond discussion of such measures of time as minutes and seconds. Through this endeavor, earth, water, fire, and wind are brought to life, and mind, intent, consciousness, and wisdom are made to experience the Great Death. Thus, in this lineage of ours, we have habitually received the Precepts, employing spring and fall, winter and summer, as Their tools.

The present activities of tall bamboo and plantain are making a picture. Accordingly, those who may awaken upon hearing the sound of bamboo being struck will make a picture, whether they be dragons or garter snakes,[12] for they will not harbor any doubts about the sentimental concerns of the mundane or the saintly.

That cane can be long, this way,
And this cane can be short, this way,
This cane can be long, this way,
And that cane can be short, this way.[13]

Because these are all images in a picture, they are, of necessity, in accord with each other. When there are long pictures, short pictures will not be lacking. Clearly, you need to thoroughly explore this principle. Because the whole universe and all thoughts within it are the act of drawing a picture, every human thought and thing emerges from a picture, and Buddhas and Ancestors come forth from pictures as well. Thus, beyond the image of a rice cake there is no medicine to satisfy our hungers, beyond the image of hunger there is no mutual encountering among humans, and beyond the image of fulfillment there is no capability.

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12. Here, 'dragons' refers to monks of marked spiritual achievement combined with singular intellectual prowess, whereas 'garter snakes' refers to monks whose abilities are less pronounced. In either case, both are quite capable of distinguishing between the genuine and the mundane in spiritual matters.

13. To paraphrase what this poem is pointing to, those of mundane thinking may discriminate among Masters, particularly on the basis of how long such a one has been functioning as a Master, but from a spiritual perspective, someone who is a Master is so because he or she is 'this way', that is, 'such a person', one who has fully realized the Truth.

In sum, to be satisfied with being hungry, to be satisfied with not being hungry, not to satisfy one's hunger, and not to satisfy one's not being hungry—all these would be impossible and inexpressible were it not for an image of hunger. You need to explore through your training that the concrete here and now at this very moment is a picture of a rice cake. When you explore the fundamental point of this through your body and mind, you will begin to master the meritorious function of ever so slightly setting things in motion and of your being set in motion by things. Prior to this meritorious function manifesting itself before your very eyes, your ability to learn the Way has not yet manifested fully. When you make this meritorious function fully manifest, you will fully realize just what a picture is.

Given to the assembly on the fifth day of the eleventh lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (November 28, 1242) at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple.

Copied by me on the seventh day of the eleventh lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (November 30, 1242) in the Kōshōhōrin-ji Guest Office.

Ejō

40

On Functioning Fully

(Zenki)

Translator's Introduction: As the postscript at the end of this discourse indicates, this talk was given by Dōgen not only for the benefit of his monastic community but also for the benefit of his lay followers, including his major lay patron, the Governor of Izumi Province. The discourse has an underlying assumption which may not be immediately evident to Western readers, namely that all humans have Buddha Nature, and indeed, are Buddha Nature, and that Buddha Nature is our True Self. Thus, even though we may not yet have recognized that this is the case, nevertheless our Buddha Nature is constantly functioning as Buddha Nature at all times, in life and in death, never ceasing or disappearing or lying dormant, ever displaying Itself right before our very eyes.

When we thoroughly explore what the Great Way of the Buddhas is, we find that It is liberation from delusion and letting our True Self manifest to the full. For some, this liberation from delusion means that life liberates us from life, and death liberates us from death. Therefore, both our getting out of birth-and-death and our entering into birth-and-death are the Great Way. Both our laying birth-and-death aside and our going beyond birth-and-death to the Other Shore are also the Great Way. Our True Self revealing Itself to the full is what life is, and life is our True Self revealing Itself to the full. At the time when our True Self reveals Itself, we can say that there is nothing that is not a full displaying of life, and there is nothing that is not a full displaying of death.

It is the operating of this True Self that causes life to come about and causes death to come about. At the very moment when we fully manifest this functioning of our True Self, It will not necessarily be something great or something small, or the whole universe or some limited bit of it, or something drawn out or something short and quick. Our life at this very moment is the True Self in operation, and the operating of our True Self is our life at this very moment.

Life is not something that comes and life is not something that goes; life is not something that reveals itself and life is not something that is accomplished. Rather, life is a displaying of one's Buddha Nature to the full, and death is also a displaying of one's Buddha Nature to the full. You need to realize that both life and death occur in the immeasurable thoughts and things within ourselves.

Also, calmly reflect upon whether this life of the present moment, as well as the various thoughts and things that co-exist with this life, are a part of life or are not a part of life. There is nothing—not a single moment, not a single thought or thing—that is not a part of life. There is nothing—not a single matter, not a single state of mind—that is not also a part of life. For instance, life is like a time when I am on board a boat. While I'm on this boat, I manipulate the sails, I handle the rudder, I push the punting pole. At the same time, the boat is carrying me along, and there is no 'I' that is outside this boat. My sailing in a boat is what makes this boat be a boat. You need to do your utmost to explore through your training what is going on at this very moment, for at this very moment there is nothing other than the world of the boat. The sky, the water, the shore—all have become this moment of the boat, which is completely different from occasions when I am not on a boat. Thus, life is what I am making life to be, and I am what life is making me to be. While being carried on a boat, my body and mind, with their inner causes and outer conditions, are, all together, a part of the way a boat functions. The whole of the great earth and the whole of the expanse of space are, likewise, a part of the way a boat functions. What this metaphor is saying is that life is what 'I' is, and 'I' is what life is.

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The venerable monk Meditation Master Engo Kokugon once said, "Life is a manifestation of one's entire being, and death is a manifestation of one's entire being." We need to thoroughly explore this saying and clarify what it means. In the present instance, what 'thoroughly exploring this saying' refers to is the principle that life is a manifestation of one's entire being and is not concerned with beginnings and endings, for life is the whole of the great earth and the whole of unbounded space. At the same time, not only does this principle not stand against life's being a manifestation of one's entire being, but it also does not stand against death's being a manifestation of one's entire being. When death is also a manifestation of one's entire being, it is the whole of the great earth and the whole of unbounded space. And at the same time, not only does this principle not stand against death's being a manifestation of one's entire being, but it also does not get in the way of life's being a manifestation of one's entire being. Hence, life does not get in the way of death, and death does not get in the way of life. Both the whole of the great earth and the whole of unbounded space exist within life, and they exist within death as well.

Even so, it is not that the whole of the great earth is one thing and the whole of unbounded space is another thing; both operate to the full in life and both operate to the full in death. Therefore, even though it is not a matter of their being

one single thing, it is also not a matter of their being different things. And even though it is not a matter of their being different things, it is also not a matter of their being identical things. And even though it is not a matter of their being identical things, it is also not a matter of their being many things. Hence, there are the various thoughts and things that are manifestations of one's entire being in life, and there are also the various thoughts and things that are manifestations of one's entire being in death, and there are the manifestations of one's entire being that are beyond 'life' and beyond 'death'. Both life and death exist within the manifestation of one's entire being.

Thus, all functions in life-and-death will be present, like a strong-armed man flexing his muscles or like someone at night reaching behind himself to grope for his pillow. They come forth whenever there is abundant luminosity from one's marvelous innate spiritual abilities. At the very moment of their coming forth, because the person is functioning fully within their coming forth, such a one may think that before they fully appeared in front of him, they had not appeared at all. Yet, before this full manifestation, there were previous manifestations of that person's True Nature. Even though such a person may say that he had some previous manifestation of his True Nature, it has not inhibited the present appearance of his True Nature. Thus it is that discriminatory opinions may arise before one's very eyes.[1]

Delivered to the assembly in the Kyoto office of the Governor of Izumi Province on the seventeenth day of the twelfth lunar month in the third year of the Ninji era (January 10, 1243).[2]

Copied by me on the nineteenth day of the first month in the fourth year of the same era (February 9, 1243).[3]

Ejō

1. Such as the opinion that the manifestation of one's True Nature is a one-time thing.
2. The governor, Yoshishige Hatano, was one of Dōgen's principle supporters.
3. The seeming contradiction that both the third and the fourth years of the Ninji era occurred in 1243 is due to the fact that, in the lunar calendar, the last day of the third year fell on January 21, 1243, according to the Western solar calendar. The new lunar year, by our reckoning, then began on January 22.

41

On Expressing One's True Nature by Expressing One's Intent

(Sesshin Sesshō)

Translator's Introduction: This title contains an ambiguity that is lost in translation. The term *sesshin* can be rendered either as 'expressing one's intent' or as 'expressing one's mind'. However, Dōgen refers to the phrase 'expressing one's mind' as a misinterpretation, especially if 'expressing' is taken to mean 'talking about', implying an intellectual discussion about the nature of mind. *Sesshō,* 'expressing one's intent', refers specifically to actively expressing one's spiritual intention to help all sentient beings reach the Other Shore. This is the way in which someone expresses his or her True Nature, which Dōgen identifies as one's Buddha Nature. And the expression of one's True Nature takes the form of expressing one's spiritual intent.

> Once when Meditation Master Shinzan Sōmitsu was out on a walk with Great Master Tōzan Ryokai, the latter pointed to a nearby temple and said, "Within that temple, there is one who is expressing his True Nature by expressing his intention."
>
> Shinzan, his elder brother in the Sangha, asked, "And who is that one?"
>
> Tōzan replied, "With your asking this one question, my elder brother in the Sangha, that one has forthwith succeeded in completely passing away into death."
>
> His elder brother Shinzan then asked, "Then who is it that is expressing his intention and expressing his True Nature?"
>
> Tōzan replied, "He has revived from within death."[1]

The statement "To express one's intention is to express one's True Nature" is the foundation of the Buddha's Way from which Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor have emerged. Were it not for Their expressing Their True Nature by expressing Their intent, the wondrous Wheel of the Dharma would never have turned, the intention to realize Buddhahood would never have arisen, and training and practice would never have manifested. And the Truth would never have been

1. This dialogue has a deeper meaning which Dōgen will reveal later. In the meantime, this dialogue can be understood as a reference to the dropping off of the illusory self.

realized simultaneously with the great earth and its sentient beings, for there has never been any sentient being who lacked Buddha Nature. Shakyamuni's raising of the flower, His eyes atwinkle, was His way of expressing His intention as an expression of His True Nature. Makakashō's face breaking out into a smile was his way of putting it. Our Second Chinese Ancestor Eka's respectfully bowing to Bodhidharma and then standing quietly in his place was his way of putting it. Our Ancestral Master Bodhidharma's entering China during the Liang dynasty was his way, and Daiman Kōnin's Transmitting the kesa* to Daikan Enō was his way. A certain Master's holding up his traveling staff* was his way, and another Master's laying down his ceremonial hossu* was his way of expressing his intention as an expression of his True Nature.

Generally speaking, every single meritorious action of Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor has been, through and through, Their expressing Their intention as an expression of Buddha Nature. There are ways of doing this in a normal, everyday manner, and there are ways of expressing it as 'the tiles* and stones of one's walls and fences'. And thus the principle described as "The arising of intentions is what gives rise to all the various thoughts and things" fully emerges, as does the principle described as "The dying away of intentions is the dying away of all the various thoughts and things." Nevertheless, one's intention is being expressed on such occasions, as is one's True Nature.

At the same time, run-of-the-mill folks have not penetrated into what intention means and they have not mastered what True Nature means, therefore they are in the dark as to what 'expressing intention' and 'expressing True Nature' really mean. Being ignorant of the profundity of what is being talked about and of the wonders that are being discussed, they say—and teach—that such things cannot possibly exist in the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Because they do not know that 'expressing mind and expressing nature' means 'expressing one's intention and expressing one's True Nature', they think of it as 'talking about the mind and talking about the nature of things'. This is because they have not made an effort to critically examine whether they have indeed penetrated the Great Way.

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A certain monk called Meditation Master Daie Sōkō,[2] once said:

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* See *Glossary*.

2. Daie was in the Rinzai Zen tradition, and is credited with having instituted the practice of focusing on deliberate penetration into classic kōan stories, rather than keeping to themeless

> Folks today are fond of talking about mind and talking about nature, and because they are fond of talking about profundities and talking about wonders, they are slow to realize the Way. Since mind and nature form a duality, once these folks have discarded this duality, and have forgotten all about the profound and the wondrous as well, then dualities will no longer arise, and they will experience the Truth that the Buddha promised them.

These remarks of his show that he was still unaware of the silken thread that binds the Buddhas and Ancestors together, nor had he comprehended what the lifeline of the Buddhas and Ancestors is.[3] Accordingly, he only understood 'mind' to refer to discriminative thinking and consciousness, so he spoke this way because he had not learned that the various functions, such as discriminative thinking and consciousness, are what the intellective mind is. He wrongly viewed 'nature' to mean something that is abundantly clear and peacefully inactive, and did not understand whether Buddha Nature and the nature of all thoughts and things existed or did not exist. And because he had not seen his True Nature as It is, not even in his dreams, he had a false view of what Buddha Dharma is. The 'mind' that the Buddhas and Ancestors spoke of is the very Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow. And the 'nature' that the Buddhas and Ancestors have preserved is a monk's traveling staff and the shaft of a bamboo arrow.[4] The Buddhas and Ancestors have profoundly realized the Buddhahood promised Them by the Buddha, and this is what is meant by being a pillar* of the temple or a stone lantern.* How wondrous it is that the Buddhas and Ancestors hold up and offer to us Their wise discernment and understanding!

From the first, the Buddhas and Ancestors who are really Buddhas and Ancestors have always learned that this 'mind' and this 'nature' refer to 'intention' and 'Buddha Nature', and have given expression to them, and have put them into practice, and have awakened to them. They have preserved and kept to this profound and wondrous Teaching, exploring It through their training with their Master. We call those who are like this the Buddha's descendents who are truly

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meditation. Dōgen, in a rare criticism of specific monks, held Daie responsible for what he considered a perversion and betrayal of the pre-Daie Rinzai tradition.

3. The particular silken thread that is mentioned here was used to bind Scriptural texts together and, as a metaphor, refers to the 'thread of Transmission' that runs through, and binds together, the Buddhas and Ancestors.

4. A monk's traveling staff and the shaft of a bamboo arrow are common metaphors for what a Zen Master uses to point a disciple to the truth.

studying the Buddhas and Ancestors. Those who are not like this are not really studying the Way.

Thus, Daie, your 'attaining the Way' does not attain the Way, and when it is time to go beyond attaining the Way, you are unable to do so. You stumble your way through both the times of attaining and the times of going beyond attaining. As you would have it, Daie, since mind and nature form a duality, we ought to discard them. This is your little attempt to explain 'mind', an effort that can only explain one-hundred-thousand-millionth of it! To say that the profound and the wondrous are both to be discarded is but one small aspect of it, and yet it is the only aspect that you bring up for discussion when talking about them. Without learning what the key point to all of this is, you foolishly speak of forgetting all about them, having considered them to be things that have left your own hands and departed from your own being. You have not yet discarded the narrow views of the Lesser Course,* so how could you possibly penetrate the inner depths of the Greater Course,* to say nothing about understanding the key point of what is above and beyond Buddhahood! It is difficult to say that you have ever tasted the tea and rice of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

Simply, to earnestly explore this Matter* under a Master is to thoroughly experience, at this very moment of our existence, the expressing of our intention as the expression of our True Nature. This is how it was in the past and will be in the future. We should thoroughly explore this Matter for ourselves, since there is nothing that stands second or third to this.[5]

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> There was that time when our First Chinese Ancestor Bodhidharma gave instruction to his disciple Eka, saying, "If you simply bring to a halt all entanglements with things outside yourself and do not let your mind pant after things, then, with your very mind that is like walls and fences, you will thereby be able to enter the Way."

Eka tried in various ways to express his intention as well as his True Nature, but he did not succeed in realizing the Buddhahood that the Buddha had promised. Then, one day, he suddenly realized the Truth.

> As a result, he said to our First Ancestor, "This time, for the first time, your disciple has brought his entanglements to a halt."

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5. That is, it is unique and not simply one thing among many.

Our First Ancestor, already knowing what Eka had become aware of, did not probe further into the nature of his disciple's experience.

> He simply asked him, "You haven't realized total cessation of these entanglements, have you?"
>
> Eka replied, "No."
>
> The First Ancestor then asked, "What is it like, then, for you?"
>
> Eka replied, "As I am constantly recognizing It, I realize that words do not come near It."
>
> The First Ancestor then remarked, "That is precisely the substance of Mind which has been Transmitted by all the Buddhas and all the Ancestors of the past. Since you now have It, you yourself must guard It well."

There are those who have doubts about this story, and there are those who take it up and expound upon it. Well, this is just one story among a number of stories on how Eka trained under Bodhidharma and served him. Eka repeatedly tried expressing his intent and his True Nature. At first he did not succeed in realizing what the Buddha had promised, but, little by little, he accumulated merits and piled up virtues until he finally realized the Way that our First Ancestor had spoken of. Those who are slow of wit have considered this to mean, "When Eka first attempted to express his intention and his True Nature, he had not yet awakened to what the Buddha had promised. The fault lay in his trying to express his intention and his True Nature, but later he let go of 'expressing my intention and expressing my True Nature', and thereby realized what the Buddha had promised."[6] They are speaking in this way because they have not yet penetrated the saying, "With your very mind that is like walls and fences, you will thereby be able to enter the Way." They are especially in the dark about how to go about studying the Way. And, should you ask why this is so, well, from the time when you first give rise to the intention to spiritually awaken and incline your steps towards training and practice of the Buddha's Way, you will be heartily putting into practice a difficult course of training. And, though you put it into practice, you may not hit the bull's-eye even once in a hundred tries. Even so, you will ultimately hit the target, sometimes by following the advice of your spiritual friend and sometimes by following Scriptural texts. The one hit today is due to the strength of a hundred misses in the past. It is the fulfillment of those hundred misses. Your listening to what is taught, training in the Way, and awakening to the Truth—none

6. That is, they viewed Eka as treating his intention and his True Nature as a duality, whereas they are really two aspects of the same thing.

of these are any different from this. Although yesterday's efforts to express your intention and your True Nature were equivalent to a hundred misses, yesterday's hundred misses become today's suddenly hitting the bull's-eye. When you first begin to practice the Buddha's Way, it may be said that you have not yet thoroughly penetrated the Truth due to lingering attachments. You cannot attain the Buddha's Way by abandoning It in favor of other ways. Folks who have not yet penetrated the training and practice of the Buddha's Way from start to finish find it difficult to clarify what this principle of penetration is.

The Buddha's Way is the Buddha's Way even when one first gives rise to the intention to train, and It is the Buddha's Way even when one fully realizes the Truth: It is the Buddha's Way—beginning, middle, and end. It is comparable to someone's walking for thousands of miles. When walking ten thousand miles, all that one can do is to take one step at a time, and within ten thousand miles are tens of thousands of steps. Even though the first step and the ten-thousandth step are different, all of it is still simply the act of walking ten thousand miles. At the same time, folks who have reached the height of folly believe that during the time when one is studying the Buddha's Way, one has not yet reached the Buddha's Way, for only when one has gone beyond Buddhahood is It really the Buddha's Way. They are like this because they do not know that the whole Way is our expressing the Way, that the whole Way is our practicing the Way, and that the whole Way is our realizing the Way. Those folks talk the way they do because they have been taught that only deluded people experience the great realization through their training and practice of the Buddha's Way. As a result, they do not realize that non-deluded people also experience the great realization through their training and practice of the Buddha's Way.

Even before we have realized what the Buddha promised, expressing our Buddha Nature by expressing our intent is already the Way of Buddhas. At the same time, it is through our expressing our True Nature by expressing our intent that we realize what the Buddha promised. We must not explore through our training that 'realizing what the Buddha promised' is restricted to the first great realization of a deluded person. The deluded have their great realization, and the enlightened have their great realization, and the unenlightened have their great realization, and the undeluded have their great realization, and all those who have realized what the Buddha promised have actually realized what the Buddha promised.

Consequently, expressing one's intention as an expression of one's True Nature is being straight and true within the Buddha's Way. Not having thoroughly comprehended this principle, Daie advises us that we should express neither our intention nor our True Nature, but this is not a principle of the Buddha Dharma.

And, alas, things are so bad today in Great Sung China that there is no one who can even come up to gentleman Daie's low level of understanding.

Our Founding Ancestor, Great Master Tōzan Ryokai, who was uniquely venerated among our Ancestors, had thoroughly penetrated the principle that 'expressing one's mind' and 'expressing one's nature' are comparable, on a deeper level, to expressing one's intention as an expression of one's True Nature. An Ancestral Master who has not thoroughly penetrated this principle cannot have an expression comparable to the one Tōzan made in the account I told at the beginning of this discourse.

> Once when Meditation Master Shinzan Sōmitsu was out on a walk with Great Master Tōzan Ryokai, the latter pointed to a nearby temple and said, "Within that temple, there is One who is expressing His True Nature by expressing His intention."[7]

From the time when our Founding Ancestor set up his temple, his Dharma descendants have, without exception, correctly Transmitted our Ancestral tradition. It is something that those in other traditions have not even dreamed of. How much less could they know, even in a dream, how to understand it! Only his authentic heirs have correctly Transmitted it. Had they not correctly Transmitted this principle, how could anyone penetrate to what is fundamental in the Buddha's Way? The principle that we are now talking about, whether we plumb its depths or merely scratch its surface, is that of some human being expressing his or her intent and True Nature. The mind expressing itself, both on the outer surface and deeply within, is the True Nature expressing Itself both on the outer surface and deeply within. You need to do your utmost to thoroughly explore this. There is no expression that lacks True Nature, and there is no intention that lacks an expression.

What we call 'Buddha Nature' means that all things are expressing It, and what we call 'lacking a Buddha Nature' also means that all things are expressing It. Though we may explore through our training that Buddha Nature is what is meant by 'nature', if we should fail to explore through our training that we have Buddha Nature, it would not be the way to study the Way. And if we should fail to explore through our training that we lack a Buddha Nature, it would also not be the way to

7. This change in rendering the dialogue that Dōgen presented in the opening of this discourse presents a deeper, spiritual meaning behind this exchange.

explore the Matter through our training.[8] When we explore the Teaching that expressing our intention through our training is synonymous with our True Nature, we become a Dharma heir of an Ancestor of the Buddha; when we trust that our True Nature is expressing Itself, we become an Ancestor of the Buddha for our Dharma heirs.

To state that "One's mind is ever restless, whereas one's nature is steady" is an assertion of non-Buddhists. To state that "The innate nature of things is profoundly clear, whereas their forms are ever shifting" is also an assertion of non-Buddhists. The way that Buddhists study 'mind' and 'nature' is not the way those folks study it. The way that Buddhists put their intentions into practice so as to put their Nature into practice is in no way like the behavior of non-Buddhists. The way that Buddhists clarify what Mind and Nature are finds no equivalent in what non-Buddhists teach.

In the Buddha's Way, there is an expression of intention that is personal and an expression of True Nature that is also personal, and there is an expression of both of them that goes beyond the personal. Also, there is a way of not expressing them that is personal, and there is a way of not expressing them that goes beyond the personal. When we have not yet studied the expressing of intention that goes beyond the personal, then this will be an expressing of intention which has not yet reached fertile ground. When we have not yet studied the expressing of intention that is personal, this too will be an expressing of intention that has not yet reached fertile ground. We study the expressing of intent that goes beyond any person, we study That which goes beyond the personal in expressing Its intent, we study a personal expressing of intention, and we study that there is someone who expresses his intention.

The strongest way that Rinzai phrased it was merely as 'a real person who is beyond rank'; he still had not phrased it as 'a real person who has a rank'. He had not yet displayed any other ways of exploring this through his training or any other ways of putting it. Thus, we must say that he had not yet reached the field of the Ultimate. Because expressing one's intention and expressing one's Nature is synonymous with expressing Buddha and expressing Ancestor, we and our Master may encounter each other through hearing, and we may encounter each other through seeing.

> Shinzan, Tōzan's elder brother in the Sangha, said, "And It is Who."

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8. The meaning of 'lacking a Buddha Nature' is thoroughly explored by Dōgen in his Discourse 21: On Buddha Nature *(Busshō)*.

Elder brother Shinzan, in letting this way of expressing It emerge, could have put it this way earlier and he could put it this way later as well. 'It is Who' is his expressing his intention and his Buddha Nature right there at that moment.[9] Accordingly, at the time when it is put as "Who is It?" and at the time when it is put as "It is Who," this will be Its expressing Its intention and Its expressing Its True Nature. This expressing of Its intention and of Its True Nature is something that folks throughout the ten quarters have never known. Because they have lost sight of their Child and take It to be a thief, they likewise judge a thief to be their child.

> Tōzan replied, "With your asking this one question, my elder brother in the Sangha, that One has forthwith succeeded in completely passing away into death."

Many who are middling in their training, upon hearing these words, think, "Someone who is expressing his mind and expressing his nature is saying, 'Who is it?' and must be able forthwith to completely pass away into death." As a consequence, they are not conscious of its other meaning—'it is Who'—and never succeed in having an encounter with a Master, so it must be for them a dead and meaningless phrase. It isn't necessarily dead and meaningless. Those who have penetrated what this 'expressing True Nature by expressing intent' means must surely be few. To completely pass into death does not mean just being ten or twenty percent dead, for it means passing into death one hundred percent.[10] At that very moment, who can say that this is not some limiting of the heavens and some covering up of the earth? It will be our letting go of trying to shed light upon our past, our present, our future, and, indeed, it will be our letting go of trying to shed light upon this very moment of now.

> His elder brother Shinzan then said, "And It is Who that expresses His intention and expresses His True Nature."

Although the name referred to by the previous "Who is it?" and the present "And It is Who" is a veritable 'third son of a Mr. Chang', the One being referred to is actually 'the fourth son of a Mr. Lee'.[11]

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9. Shinzan's response can be taken both as a question and as an answer: "Who is It that resides within?" and "It is Who (one's Buddha Nature) that resides within."

10. 'Passing into death one hundred percent' refers to completely and absolutely letting go of the false self.

11. That is, in both cases these two phrases seem to be exactly the same, but they are actually completely different in meaning.

Tōzan replied, "He has revived from within death."[12]

This phrase, 'within death,' points to having been able to pass directly into death. And Shinzan's saying "It is Who," which was not a casual remark, points directly to the condition of expressing his Nature by expressing his intent. This 'Who' directs the person who is expressing His intention and expressing His True Nature. Something to explore through your training is the assertion that we do not necessarily anticipate a one hundred percent passing away into death. The Great Master's statement, "He has revived from within death," refers to the manifesting of sounds and forms before one's very eyes, which expresses both intent and True Nature. And yet, even this will only be some ten or twenty percent of the entirety of passing away into death. Life, even though it is the totality of life, is not something wherein death is transformed and manifests as life. It is simply our letting go, from start to finish, of the notion of our 'possessing' life.

In sum, in the words and ways of the Buddhas and Ancestors, there is an expressing of one's intent and of one's True Nature like that described above, which is to be thoroughly explored through one's training. And to take this further, when we die a one hundred percent death, we have lived our life to the full.

You need to realize that from the T'ang dynasty to today, there have been many pitiable creatures who have not clarified that expressing intention and expressing one's True Nature is what the Buddha's Way is about. Further, they have been going around in the dark about the Teachings, practice, and direct experience, and have therefore made reckless remarks and unfounded assertions. We need to help them overcome what they have been and to realize what they can be. For their sake, we say that expressing Their True Nature by expressing Their intent has been the essential function of the Seven Buddhas* along with our ancestral Masters.

Delivered to the assembly in the first year of the Kangen era (1243) in Japan, at Kippō-ji Temple in the Yoshida Prefecture of Echizen Province.

Copied by me on the eleventh day of the first lunar month in the second year of the same era (February 20, 1244) while at the office of the Abbot's assistant.

Ejō

12. Whereas Dōgen begins by discussing this dialogue from the standpoint of the dropping off of self, he now discusses it from the point of view of dropping off 'dropping off'. In other words, since the concept of self is an illusion, there is nothing to be dropped off. However, we cannot know this until the time when the false ego has been let go of. At that time, we discover that 'That Which Is' is the One who has actually done the dropping off, for It has ever been the only true reality.

42

On Invocations: What We Offer to the Buddhas and Ancestors

(Darani)

Translator's Introduction: Traditionally, a *darani* (Skt. *dhāraṇi)* is a prayer-like invocation used to pay homage to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and it may include some form of supplication. Dōgen expands upon the use of this verbal form to include other manners of expressing homage and supplication, such as making respectful bows to one's Master.

When someone's eye for exploring the essential Matter* through training with a Master is clear, the Eye of the True Teaching will be clear. And because the Eye of the True Teaching is clear, that person's eye for exploring the essential Matter through training with a Master can be clear. Whenever someone receives the authentic Transmission of this key point, it is inevitably due to the strength of that person's showing respect for a great spiritual friend. This is the great relationship: this is the Great Invocation. 'The great spiritual friend' refers to an Ancestor of the Buddha, one to whom a trainee should dutifully serve towel and water pitcher.[1] Thus, to bring tea to your Master or to make tea for your Master is to manifest the very heart and essence of the Teaching. It is to manifest the utmost marvelous spiritual ability.[2] To bring wash-up water to your Master and to pour it out for him is to leave coexisting conditions undisturbed and to discern what is going on from the next room.[3] It is not only exploring through your training the very heart and essence of the Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors, it is your mutual encounter with one or two Ancestors of the Buddha within the very heart and essence of the Teaching. It is not only your receiving and making use of the

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* See *Glossary.*

1. One of the first everyday tasks for an Abbot's Assistant was to bring the Abbot a towel and a pitcher of warm water for him to use in performing his morning ablutions.
2. The marvelous spiritual ability is spontaneously doing our everyday activities whilst remaining free of a false self; it is our anticipating what needs to be done and then just doing it. Dōgen discusses this ability in Discourse 24: On the Marvelous Spiritual Abilities *(Jinzū)*.
3. It was customary for an Abbot's Assistant to anticipate the Master's needs whilst waiting in the assistant's room, which adjoined that of the Master.

marvelous spiritual ability of the Buddhas and Ancestors, it is your having found seven or eight Ancestors of the Buddha within your marvelous spiritual ability. Accordingly, the marvelous spiritual ability of each and every Buddha and Ancestor has been fully realized in this one bouquet of activities; the very heart and essence of the Teaching of each and every Buddha and Ancestor has been fully expressed in one picking of this bouquet. Because of this, in showing your respect for the Ancestors of the Buddha, there is nothing wrong in doing so by offering incomparable flowers and incense. Even so, to raise up the invocation of your meditative state and respectfully make an alms offering of it is to be an offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

What is called 'the Great Invocation' refers to paying our respects, and because paying our respects is the Great Invocation, to pay our respects is to mutually encounter the Buddhas and Ancestors within our paying respect to Them. The term 'paying our respects' is patterned on a Chinese way of speaking and has been in social usage for ever so long. Be that as it may, it was not passed on to us from the Brahmanical Heaven or from India, but was correctly Transmitted from the Ancestors of the Buddha. It is beyond the physical realm of sights and sounds, so do not discuss whether it is something that comes before or after the Lords of Awe-inspiring Voices.

This paying of our respects is our lighting incense and respectfully making prostrations before our Master. Sometimes our Master is the one who ordained us upon our leaving home life behind and sometimes our Master is the one who Transmitted the Dharma to us. And there are cases where the Master who Transmitted the Dharma to us may also be the very Master who ordained us upon our leaving home life behind. To continually depend upon and show respect to these Masters is our prayer for seeking out a Master to put one's spiritual question to. As it is said, we should do our training under them and give them our support, without letting any moment be wasted.

At the beginning and end of our summer retreat, at the time of the winter solstice, and at the beginning and middle of each month, without fail, you should light incense and respectfully make prostrations to your Master. The following procedures should be used when paying your respects. A customary time for doing this is just before or just after taking your breakfast gruel. Dressed in a respectful way, pay your visit to the Master's quarters. 'Dressed in a respectful way' means wearing your kesa,* carrying your bowing mat, arranging your indoor sandals and white socks, and carrying a stick of some incense, such as aloes or sandalwood. When you come before your Master, you make monjin.* The attendant monk then prepares the incense burner and sets up a candle. If the Master is already seated, you should forthwith light the incense, or if the Master is behind the curtain, you

should forthwith light your incense.[4] If the Master is lying down or eating, then you should forthwith light your incense. If the Master is standing up, you should ask the venerable monk to be seated and then make monjin to him, or ask him to make himself comfortable: there are various conventional ways of asking him to be seated. After you have let the venerable monk get seated in a chair, you make monjin to him. It should be a deep bow, as prescribed. After you have finished making monjin, you walk up to the incense stand and place the incense stick that you have been carrying into the incense burner in an upright position. Prior to being lit, the incense is sometimes carried by sticking it between the back of your robe and your neckband, or sometimes you carry it tucked in the bosom or the sleeve of your robe, as you wish. After making monjin, you take this incense stick out and, if it is wrapped in paper, turn your shoulder to the left and remove the wrapping paper. Then, holding the lit incense stick aloft with both hands, place it in the incense burner. You should set the incense straight. Do not let it lean to the side. When you have finished setting up the incense stick, you walk to the right with hands held in shashu.* When you arrive in front of your Master, facing the venerable monk you make a deep bow, doing monjin in the prescribed manner. Once you have finished, you spread your bowing mat and respectfully do your prostrations. You do either nine prostrations or twelve. When your prostrations are over, fold up your bowing mat and make monjin. And there are times when you just spread out your mat and do three prostrations, and then offer the compliments of the season. With the present nine bows, you do not offer the compliments of the season, but should just spread your mat and make three prostrations three times. This custom has been passed on from the Seven Buddhas* in the distant past. We use this custom since it directly Transmits the fundamental principle of our tradition. Whenever we encounter a time for respectfully doing our prostrations, we should not fail to do them in this manner. In addition to this, whenever we have the opportunity to receive the benefits of a Dharma talk, we respectfully make our bows, and we respectfully bow when asking our Master for an explanation of some story about the Chinese Zen Masters. In the past, whenever the Second Chinese Ancestor asked the First Ancestor for his viewpoints, Eka always respectfully made three bows just like this. Whenever Bodhidharma expounded his perspective on the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, the Second Ancestor would respectfully make three bows.

You need to realize that respectfully bowing <u>is</u> the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, and that the Treasure House of the Eye of the True

4. This curtain is made of a thin, semi-transparent cloth and is often used as a room divider.

Teaching is the Great Invocation. In requesting a Master for an explanation, there are many in recent times who employ one prostration during which they thump their head on the ground, but the traditional manner is to do three prostrations. Prostrations done in gratitude for the benefit of the Dharma are not necessarily nine or twelve in number, but they may be three prostrations, or one less formal bow done respectfully, or six prostrations. All these are bows in which the forehead touches the mat.[5] In India, these were called the supreme bows of respect. Also, there are the six bows in which the forehead strikes the ground. (It has been said that when the forehead contacted the ground, it struck with such force that it would cause bleeding. For this reason too, the bowing mat was spread out.) Be it one bow, three bows, or six bows, in all cases the forehead comes in contact with the ground. Sometimes this is called 'kowtowing'. This type of bowing also exists in secular society, where there are nine types of bows. When receiving the benefits of the Dharma there is also 'continuous bowing'. That is, we respectfully bow without ceasing, which can reach hundreds of thousands of bows. These are all bows which are habitually used within the assembly of an Ancestor of the Buddha.

Speaking generally about these bows, you should simply follow the directions of your venerable monk and do your bows in the prescribed manner. In sum, when respectful bowing abides in the world, the Buddha Dharma will abide in the world. Should respectful bowing pass away, then the Buddha Dharma will disappear.

In bowing respectfully to the Master who is Transmitting the Dharma to us, we do not choose only a specific time or argue over a specific place, we just bow. Sometimes we bow to him when he is lying down or eating, and sometimes we bow to him when he is occupied with relieving nature. Sometimes we are separated from him by a wall or a fence, and sometimes we are separated from him by a mountain or a river, but, looking from afar, we respectfully bow to him. Sometimes we respectfully bow to him even though we are separated from him by eons of time, and sometimes we respectfully bow to him even though we are separated from him by life and death, or by coming and going. And sometimes we respectfully bow to him even though we are separated from him by enlightenment and nirvana.

A disciple may do various bows like these, whereas the venerable monk who is your Master does not return your bow, but simply puts his hands in gasshō.*

5. 'The forehead touches the mat' is a rendering of a technical term for a form of prostration in which one raises one's hands, palms upward, once the head has lightly touched the mat. It is done as if to raise above one's head the feet of the person being bowed to.

There may be occasions when he spontaneously makes use of a single bow, but customarily he does not employ that ceremony. At the time of your making such respectful bows, you do them while facing north. The venerable monk who is your Master is sitting upright, facing south. Standing on the ground, right before the venerable monk who is your Master, and facing north, you do your bow to him. This is the basic ceremony.[6] It has been correctly Transmitted that when genuine trust in the Master arises within someone, respectfully bowing while facing north is inevitably the first thing that occurs to that person.

This is why, in the days of the World-honored One, the human beings, celestial beings, and dragons who had taken refuge in the Buddha respectfully bowed whilst facing north out of reverence for Him. At first, after the Tathagata had realized the Truth, His five ascetic companions—Ajnyata Kaundinya, Ashvaji, Mahanama, Bhadrika, and Bashpa, who are known in Japan as Kōrin, Ahei, Makakōri, Batsudai, and Jūrikikashō —without giving it a thought, rose up and turned to face the Tathagata, offering Him their respectful bows whilst facing north. When non-Buddhists and bands of demons completely discarded their false views and took refuge in the Buddha, they invariably faced north and respectfully bowed, giving no heed to themselves or others.

Since then, for twenty-eight generations in India and the various generations in China, all those who have come to the assemblies of Ancestral Masters and have taken refuge in the True Dharma have respectfully bowed whilst facing north. This is an affirmation of the True Dharma and is beyond simply paying heed to the desires of Master or disciple. It is the Great Invocation.

There is the Great Invocation that, for our sake, is called 'fully perfected understanding',
And there is the Great Invocation that, for our sake, is called 'paying our respects',
And there is the Great Invocation that is the full manifestation of bowing respectfully,
And there is the Great Invocation whose name is the kesa,
And there is the Great Invocation whose name is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching.

6. The north-south positions were conventionally used in Chinese Buddhism to indicate who is the host (north) and who the guest (south) and did not necessarily correspond to geographical north and south.

By reciting this invocation, we continually remain in stillness and thereby preserve the whole of the great earth. By continually remaining in stillness, we thereby fill the worlds in all the quarters. By continually remaining in stillness, we make manifest the whole sphere of time. By continually remaining in stillness, we cultivate the whole of the Buddha Realms. And by continually remaining in stillness, we realize what is within our hermit's hut and what is outside our hermit's hut. You need to thoroughly explore through your training that this is what the Great Invocation is really like. All invocations take this Invocation as their matrix. All invocations fully manifest as dependents of this Invocation. From the gateway of this Invocation, all Buddhas and Ancestors, bar none, derive Their giving rise to Their intention to realize the Truth and to earnestly follow the Way, right up to Their realization of the Truth and Their turning the Wheel of the Dharma. Since we are already the offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors, we should thoroughly explore this Invocation in detail.

In sum, the robe that covered Shakyamuni Buddha has also covered all Ancestors of the Buddha in the ten quarters. And the robe that covered Shakyamuni Buddha is the kesa. The kesa is as a flag flown by Buddhists; it is the standard for their practice of the Buddha's Way. The chance to see the kesa and to undertake the practice is rarely encountered, rarely met with. You have received a human body in a remote land, which is rare enough, and, though some may say that you are foolish, the strength of your good roots from invocations performed in past lives is fully manifesting so that you now have the opportunity to encounter the Dharma of Shakyamuni Buddha. Though you are doing respectful bows to the Buddhas and Ancestors who have realized the Truth and are helping others to realize the Truth amidst the hundreds of thoughts and things that are sprouting up, this is Shakyamuni Buddha's fulfilling the Way; it is Shakyamuni Buddha's doing His utmost to practice the Way; it is Shakyamuni Buddha's wondrous transformation of the Great Invocation. Even though you may do respectful bows to former Buddhas of the past and present for billions of kalpas* beyond count, they will still simply be moments of being Shakyamuni Buddha.

To cover our body with a kesa even once is to have already obtained Shakyamuni Buddha's body and flesh, hands and feet, head and eyes, marrow and brains, and to shine forth, turning the Wheel of the Dharma. Such is the case when we wear the kesa, for this is our fully manifesting the merit of wearing the kesa. We preserve it and rely upon it, we love it and devote ourselves to it, and, over time, we protect it. We wear the kesa as we respectfully bow and make our offerings to Shakyamuni Buddha. This is our doing our utmost to pursue the Way through our training and practice over incalculable eons of time.

Our respectfully bowing to Shakyamuni Buddha and making our offerings to Him means that we are respectfully bowing and making our offerings to the Master who has Transmitted the Dharma to us and to the Master who shaved our head. This is nothing other than our encountering Shakyamuni Buddha. It is our making a Dharma offering to Shakyamuni Buddha. It is our offering an invocation to Shakyamuni Buddha. In pointing this out, my former Master, the Old Buddha of Mount Tendō, said, "It is like Eka's coming over the snows to do his respectful bowing or like Enō's standing amidst the winnowed rice and doing his respectful bowing; these are excellent examples. They are the traces of former Ancestors. They are the Great Invocation."

Delivered to the assembly during the first year of the Kangen era (1243) at Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province.

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Ejō

43

On the Moon as One's Excellent Nature

(Tsuki)

Translator's Introduction: Although the Chinese characters that Dōgen employs for the title of this discourse may be translated as 'one's excellent Nature', this term does not occur in the text itself. Rather, Dōgen appears to have used it to spell out with Chinese characters the Japanese word *tsuki*, 'the moon', which is a common Buddhist metaphor for one's innate Buddha Nature—the Moon of our Original Nature. And, at the same time, one's excellent Nature is synonymous with one's innate Buddha Nature.

Some readers may find this discourse less obscure if they substitute the words 'Buddha Nature' for the word 'Moon'.

Instances of Moons becoming full are not just 'three and three before that' and 'three and three after that'. And our innately fully perfected Moons are likewise not just 'three and three before that' and 'three and three after that'.[1] This is why Shakyamuni Buddha said:

> *The true Dharma Body of the Buddha*
> *Is unbounded, like empty space.*
> *It reveals Its form by conforming to an object,*
> *Like water reflecting the moon.*

The Ultimate Reality described as being 'like water reflecting the moon' may also be expressed as 'the Water and Its Moon', 'the real Water', 'the real Moon', 'being within Reality,' or 'the Reality within'. It goes beyond expressing what things appear to be like as Reality, for Reality is what is.

The real Dharma Body of the Buddha is just like unbounded space. And because this 'unbounded space' <u>is</u> the real Dharma Body of the Buddha, the whole earth, the whole of all realms, all thoughts and things—that is, all things that manifest—are, in themselves, unbounded space. The hundreds of things that sprout up and the myriad forms that they take—all of which manifest before our very eyes—are just like the Dharma Body of the Buddha, <u>and</u> they are the real Dharma

1. That is, instances of people fully realizing their Buddha Nature (that is, having a kenshō) are just as beyond count as the number of people who have Buddha Nature, which is everyone.

Body of the Buddha, and they are like the moon in water.[2] The time of the Moon's arising is not invariably at night, and the night is not necessarily the dark, so do not depend simply on narrow human ways of measuring things.[3] Even in places where there is no sun or moon, there will be day and night, for the sun and moon do not exist for the sake of day and night. And because the Sun and Moon are, both together, what is ultimately real, there is not just one or two Moons, nor just a thousand or myriad Moons. Even if some people say of themselves that their own Moon supports and relies upon their personal opinion of what the Moon is, such is their personal view of the Moon, and it is not necessarily an expression of the Buddha's Truth nor an instance of their wisely discerning what the Buddha's Truth is. Thus, even though we may say that there is a Moon tonight, the Moon tonight is not last night's Moon. You need to explore through your training that tonight's Moon through and through—beginning, middle, and end—is just tonight's Moon.[4] Because a Moon has inherited the Truth from a Moon, the Moon exists as such, but It is not something new or old.

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Meditation Master Banzan Hōshaku once said:

The Moon of our heart and mind is solitary and at the full,
Its light swallows up all forms that arise.[5]
Its light is not something that illumines concrete objects,
And concrete objects, in turn, are not things that truly exist.[6]
When Its light and objects both vanish from sight,
There is still That which is the What.

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2. That is, the Dharma Body of the Buddha has two characteristics: It is like unbounded space and It is unbounded space. Further, all things that arise and manifest themselves have three characteristics: they are like the Dharma Body of the Buddha, they are the Dharma Body of the Buddha, and they are reflections of the Dharma Body of the Buddha.

3. That is, a kenshō does not necessarily occur in the middle of the night.

4. That is, how one's Buddha Nature may manifest today (like today's phase of the Moon) will be just for this day, and it will still be the whole of one's Buddha Nature.

5. 'Swallows up', both here and throughout this discourse, is a metaphor meaning 'takes in and comprehends'.

6. That is, they do not have a permanent, unchangeable nature.

What is now being expressed is that, without fail, the Ancestors of the Buddha, as disciples of the Buddha, possess the Moon of their heart and mind because they treat their Moon as their heart and mind. If It were not the Moon, It would not be their heart and mind, and without a heart and mind, there is no Moon. 'Solitary and at the full' means that It lacks for nothing. Whatever is more than 'two or three', we call 'all things'. When all things are in the Moon's Light, they are not seen as 'all things', hence Its Light swallows up all things. Since all things spontaneously absorb the Moon's light completely, Its Light swallows up the Moon's light, which means that Its Light swallows up all things. For instance, it will be the Moon swallowing up the Moon, and the Light swallowing up the Moon.[7] Accordingly, the Master expressed the Matter* as:

> *Its light is not something that illumines concrete objects,*
> *And concrete objects, in turn, are not things that truly exist.*

Because Banzan had attained such a state, when people could be helped to reach the Other Shore by means of a Buddha Body, he would forthwith manifest his Buddha Body and give voice to the Dharma for their sake. And when people could be helped to reach the Other Shore by means of an ordinary physical body, he would forthwith manifest that customary physical body of his and give voice to the Dharma for their sake. It is said that he never failed to turn the Wheel of the Dharma from within his Moon. Even though the lunar yin energy and the solar yang energy illumine objects by means of the fire jewel—which is the Sun—and the water jewel—which is the Moon—he would forthwith manifest both. This heart and mind of his was nothing other than his Moon, and this Moon of his was, as a matter of course, his own heart and mind. This is how the Buddha's Ancestors, as disciples of the Buddha, master the principle of mind and the details of mind.

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A Buddha of the past once said, "The whole of your mind contains everything, and everything contains the whole of your mind." Since this is so, your mind is everything, and everything is your mind. Because your heart and mind are your Moon, your Moon must be the Moon. Because everything, which is your

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7. 'The Moon's light' refers to the reflected light of the Sun (that is, Buddha Nature), whereas 'the Moon's Light' refers to the Sun Itself.

* See *Glossary.*

heart and mind, is completely the Moon, the whole universe throughout is the whole Moon throughout. And being intimately acquainted with your self, through and through, is being intimately acquainted with your Moon, through and through. Even with the 'three and three before, or three and three after' over time immemorial, who among them is not a Moon? The Buddha with the Solar Face and the Buddha with the Lunar Face—which are our body and mind along with their internal propensities and external conditions at this present moment—will both be within our Moon.[8] Birth-and-death and coming-and-going will both be in our Moon, and the whole universe in all ten quarters will be the top, bottom, left, and right within our Moon. Whatever is going on right now in our daily life will be just some of the hundreds of things that sprout up in our mind ever so clearly within our Moon, and it will be what sprouts up in the minds of the Buddhas and Ancestors within Their Moon.

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Great Master Tōsu Daidō of Shuchou Province was once asked by a monk, "What is the Moon like when It is not yet full?"[9]

The Master answered, "It swallows up three or four Moons."

The monk then asked, "And after It is full, what is It like?"

The Master replied, "It vomits out seven or eight Moons."[10]

What is being thoroughly explored here are the terms 'not yet full' and 'after becoming full'. Both of them are phases of the Moon. Within the three or four Moons that are in your Moon, there will be One that is not yet full; within the seven or eight Moons that are in your Moon, there will be One that is now at Its full. 'Swallowing up' is associated with 'three or four Moons'; such a moment as this is synonymous with a time when one's Moon is not yet full. 'Vomiting out' is associated with 'seven or eight Moons'; such a moment as this is synonymous with a time after one's Moon has reached Its full. When the Moon swallows up Moons,

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8. The Buddha with the Solar Face is said to have a lifespan of 1,800 years, whereas the lifespan of the Buddha with the Lunar Face is said to be one day. This reference was used by Meditation Master Baso to describe our original Buddha Nature as being beyond any temporal measure, such as 'long' or 'short'.

9. The topic of the discourse now shifts from the Moon as a reference to our Buddha Nature being 'what we are' to the Moon's phases, which is how our Buddha Nature manifests at different times.

10. 'Vomits out' is a metaphor for 'giving spiritual expression to'.

It will involve three or four of Them.[11] There will be signs of the Moon's swallowing up and manifestations of the Moon's vomiting out. In the Moon's vomiting out phases, there will be seven or eight of Them. There will be a Moon that manifests in the vomiting out, for the Moon is also a manifestation of vomiting out. Therefore, It is our swallowing up completely and our vomiting out completely. The whole of the earth and the whole of the heavens is what we vomit out. The whole universe is what we swallow up. We need to swallow up self and swallow up other, and we need to vomit out self and vomit out other.

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Once when Shakyamuni Buddha was giving Teaching to the Bodhisattva Vajragarbha,[12] He said:

> Just as the moving eye, for instance, can make still waters seem to pitch and roll, and just as the steady eye makes fire seem to spiral up, so too, when clouds are hastening by, the moon seems to move in the opposite way, and when one's boat is departing, the shore appears to drift in a counter direction.

We need to thoroughly explore and clarify just what it is that the Buddha has said concerning the hastening of clouds and the moving of the moon, as well as about the departing of one's boat and the drifting of the shore. Do not study this in haste or try to make it accord with the views of ordinary, worldly people. At the same time, it is a rare person who can recognize what this Buddha has voiced as the Voicing of a Buddha. When you can say that you are studying this statement as what a Buddha has voiced, then you will understand that full realization does not necessarily refer to 'body and mind' or to 'enlightenment and nirvana', and 'enlightenment and nirvana' do not necessarily refer to 'full realization' or to 'body and mind'.

As to the hastening of clouds and the moving of the moon, as well as the departing of the boat and the drifting by of the shore of which the Tathagata spoke, at the time when the clouds hasten, the moon appears to move, and at the time

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11. That is, when people are on the verge of having a spiritual experience, they will begin to show signs of its coming, which is often described as someone's 'beginning to ripen'.

12. Vajragarbha, 'He Who is a Veritable Treasure House for the Diamond of Wisdom', is a manifestation of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, who represents patient, loving activity. Please see the *Glossary* for an explanation of the term 'Bodhisattva'.

when the boat sails off, the shore appears to drift by. This is saying that the clouds and the moon are simultaneously moving at the same pace, at the same time, and in the same manner, which is beyond one beginning as the other ends, and beyond one being before and the other after. Also, it is saying that the boat and the shore are simultaneously moving at the same pace, at the same time, and in the same manner, which is beyond one starting when the other stops and beyond the two moving in cycles. When we learn about how people behave, human behavior is beyond just a matter of starting and stopping, and the behavior of starting and stopping is beyond just being human. Do not compare or judge the behavior of humans by taking up 'starting and stopping'. The hastening of clouds and the moving of the moon, as well as the sailing off of a boat and the drifting off of the shore, are all like this. Do not foolishly take a narrow-minded view of this. Do not overlook the main point. The hastening of a cloud is not described by 'east, west, south, or north' and the moving of the moon is without cease, day and night, in both the past and present. The sailing off of the boat and the drifting of the shore are beyond the three temporal worlds of past, present, and future, and they can make use of the three temporal worlds. Therefore, having 'arrived' right away at this very moment, one is sated and no longer feels hungry.

At the same time, foolish people fancy that an unmoving moon appears to be moving due to the moving of the clouds, and that the drifting shore appears to be drifting due to one's sailing off on a boat. If it were as these foolish people say, how could it possibly be the Teaching of the Tathagata? The main point of the Buddha Dharma is beyond the small-minded views of ordinary human beings and those in lofty positions. Although It is beyond reckoning, there is still training and practice in accord with the trainee's abilities. Who among you would fail, time and again, to cast your line for boat and shore, and who among you would fail to quickly cast an eye to clouds and moon? What you need to understand is that the Tathagata was not using the clouds as a metaphor for something physical or mental, nor was He using the moon as a metaphor for something physical or mental, nor was He using the boat as a metaphor for something physical or mental, nor was He using the shore as a metaphor for something physical or mental.[13] You need to take your time to thoroughly and diligently explore this principle. One inch of the Moon's movement is equal to the full realization of the Tathagata, and the full realization of the Tathagata is but an inch of the Moon's movement. It is not a matter of moving or halting, nor is it a matter of progressing or retreating. Because

13. In other words, the reality of Buddha Nature is beyond our normal ways of thinking about body and mind.

the movement of the Moon goes beyond being merely a metaphor, Its essential nature and the way It appears are Its being 'solitary and at the full'.

Keep in mind that the pace of the Moon, even if it is at a gallop, is beyond having a beginning, middle, and end. This is why the first Moon has a second Moon. The first (which is Its Essential Nature) and the second (which is the way It appears) are, both alike, Moons. 'A good time for training and practice' is what the Moon is, and 'a good time for making offerings' is what the Moon is, and, with a swish of one's sleeves, taking one's leave to go to the Meditation Hall is what the Moon is.[14] Its roundness or squareness is beyond the turning of the wheel of coming and going. Whether making use of the turning wheel of coming and going or not making use of it, the Master grabs hold of the deluded certainty of his trainees or lets them go on in their own way as he gives free reign to his elegantly skillful means, and so it is with many Moons.

Written by me on the sixth day of the first lunar month in the fourth year of the Ninji era (January 27, 1243), whilst at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple.

The Mendicant Monk Dōgen

Copied by me on the day before of the end of the summer retreat in the first year of the Kangen era (July 22, 1243).

Ejō

14. This sentence presents the three responses to the question "How is the Moon right now?" which was put by Baso to his three disciples, Seidō Chizō, Hyakujō Ekai, and Nansen Fugan, who were watching the moon one night.

44

On the Flowering of the Unbounded

(Kūge)

Translator's Introduction: *Kūge*, the title of this discourse, has various meanings. The term is used in the *Shurangama Scripture* to refer to a physical disease in which one sees non-existent 'flowers' in the sky, and it is employed in the same Scripture as a metaphor for the effects of delusion, caused by one's being spiritually 'bleary-eyed'. Dōgen extends the meaning of *kūge* to refer to things as they really are: the flowerings of Buddha Nature (That Which Is as Unbounded as Space), as seen by one whose spiritual vision has become 'unfocused', due to his having left off hard-edged, dualistic thinking, which assumes that its mental constructs are real. The flowering that Dōgen speaks of refers to the whole universe as it is, which blossoms forth from within Buddha Nature, as well as to the blossoming of a kenshō, (that is, the seeing of one's True Nature) and the manifestation of Buddhas.

Our highest Founding Ancestor Bodhidharma once said in verse:

> *And when the Single Blossom opened Its five petals,*
> *The fruit thereof naturally came about of itself.*

You need to explore through your training the occasion for this opening of the One Blossom, along with exploring Its radiance and the form It takes. The One Blossom is comprised of five petals, one atop the other. The opening up of the five petals forms the One Blossom. When you have penetrated the principle of the one blossom, it will be in accord with Bodhidharma's statement:

> *From the first, I came to this land to Transmit the Dharma*
> *That I might rescue deluded beings.*[1]

Seeking the radiance and form of this blossoming is what your investigation through your training should be all about. What Bodhidharma calls 'the resulting fruit' is something that one leaves to the fruit: he describes this as 'what naturally comes about of itself'. 'What naturally comes about of itself' is his term for

1. These two lines are the opening lines of a quatrain by Bodhidharma, whose closing lines Dōgen quoted at the start of this text.

mastering causes and being conscious of effects. There are the causes of the whole universe and there are the effects of the whole universe; there is our mastering the causes and effects of this whole universe and there is our being conscious of the causes and effects of this whole universe. One's natural self is oneself. This self, to be sure, is 'you', that is to say, it is the four elements* and the five skandhas* of which you are comprised. Because Bodhidharma is allowing for 'a true person devoid of any rank', he is not referring to a specific 'I' or to some 'other'. Therefore, that which is indefinable is what he is calling 'a self'. This natural state of 'being as it is' is what he is acknowledging.[2] The natural state of 'being as one is' is the time when the Single Blossom opens and Its fruit results: it is the occasion when the Dharma is Transmitted and one is rescued from one's delusions.

For instance, the moment when the blue lotus bursts into bloom is like being in the midst of a fire at the time of fire.[3] The fire's sparks and flames all converge at the point where the blue lotus bursts into bloom at the very moment when it bursts into bloom. If it were not the time and place of the blue lotus's blossoming, not even a single spark of fire would emerge, not even a single spark of fire would come to life. You need to know that there are hundreds of thousands of blue lotuses in a single spark of fire: they blossom forth throughout boundless space and throughout the earth. They blossomed forth in the past and they blossom forth in the present. When you witness the time and place of the fire emerging, you are witnessing the blossoming of the blue lotus. Do not let the time and place of the blue lotus pass you by, but be a witness to its blossoming.

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An enlightened one of long ago once said in a poem, "The blue lotus blooms amidst the fire." Thus it is that the blue lotus invariably blossoms forth in the midst of the fire. If you wish to know where 'being in the midst of the fire' is, it is the very place where the blue lotus blossoms forth. Do not neglect investigating 'being in the midst of the fire' through adopting the views of either ordinary people or those in lofty positions. Should you harbor any doubts, you might also doubt that

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* See *Glossary.*

2. What the translation does not make clear is that Dōgen is analyzing the word *jinen* in Bodhidharma's poem (rendered as 'naturally') as being comprised of two words: *ji* meaning 'self' and *nen* meaning 'being as it is'.

3. The blue lotus refers to the blossoming of the spiritual flower of one's training and enlightenment, not to an actual plant.

the lotus arises within the water, and you might doubt that branches and twigs have any blossoms as well. Further, should you harbor such doubts, you might well doubt the existence of the outer, objective world. But this you do not doubt. If someone is not an Ancestor of the Buddha, such a person does not know that with the opening of the blossom, the whole world arises. 'The opening of the blossom' means 'three and three before that, as well as three and three after that'. In order to make the number of these more extensive, they have accumulated a luxurious growth, soaring ever higher.[4]

Letting this principle of blossoming come of its own accord, we need to consider whether it is spring or autumn. Blossoms and fruit do not only appear in spring and in autumn. There will invariably be other times when blossoms and fruit emerge. Every flowering and fruiting has endured while they have waited for their opportunity, and every opportunity has endured while it has waited for a flowering and a fruiting. Thus, all the hundreds of things that sprout up have their time of flowering and their fruiting, just as all manner of trees have their time of flowering and their fruiting. All manner of trees—such as those of gold, silver, copper, iron, coral, or crystal—have their flowering and their fruiting. Trees of earth, water, fire, wind, and boundless space have their flowering and fruiting. Human trees have their blossoming, human flowers have their blossoming, and withered trees have their blossoming.

It is within this context that the World-honored One spoke of the flowerings within Unbounded Space. On the other hand, those folks who pay attention to very little and see even less are unaware that petals and blossoms with their varied hues and brilliance are to be found within everything. These are 'the flowers of Unbounded Space', and such folk are only barely aware of a flowering of Unbounded Space. You need to be aware that the flowers of Unbounded Space are discussed within the words and ways of the Buddha, whereas non-Buddhists have no knowledge of such discussions about the flowers of Unbounded Space, much less do they have any understanding of them! Only the Buddhas and Ancestors have known about the blossoming and falling of the flowers of Unbounded Space as well as that of earthly flowers. Only They have known of such things as the blossoming and falling of the flowers within the human world. Only They have known that such things as the flowers in Unbounded Space, earthly flowers, and the flowers within the human world are all Scriptures; this is the standard by which

4. To paraphrase, while the number of persons realizing the Truth is indefinite ('three and three before that, as well as three and three after that') it is decidedly more than just a few people. In fact, the number is staggering and ever increasing.

we investigate what Buddha is. Because what has been taught by the Buddhas and Ancestors is this flowering of Unbounded Space, the realm of Buddha and the Teachings of Buddhas are therefore synonymous with the flowerings of Unbounded Space.

At the same time, when those who are commonplace and foolish hear about what the Tathagata said—namely, that what is seen by those with bleary-eyed vision are the flowerings in Unbounded Space—they assume that 'bleary-eyed vision' refers to topsy-turvy vision in human beings. Because their own diseased vision is already topsy-turvy, they believe that one experiences flowers in Unbounded Space as something floating in an absolute void. Being attached to this understanding, they have concluded that the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form, the six worlds*of existence, the existence of Buddhahood, and the state of going beyond Buddhahood, are all really non-existent but are mistakenly seen as having existence. They go about making their living by asserting that, if we were to bring to a halt this bleary-eyed vision brought about by our delusions, we would no longer see these flowers in the void since, from the beginning, the void is devoid of flowers. How sad that folks like these do not know, from start to finish, the times of which the Tathagata spoke when flowers bloom in Unbounded Space. The principle of seeing flowers in Unbounded Space with 'bleary-eyed' vision—of which the Buddhas have spoken—is not understood by ordinary, everyday people and those who are non-Buddhists. The Buddhas and Tathagatas have trained with these flowers in Unbounded Space and They have put them into Their practice. By doing so, They have obtained Their robe, Their sitting place, and Their access to the Master's quarters, all of which is Their realizing the Way and attaining Its fruits. Holding aloft the blossom, with eyes twinkling,[5] is the raising of the spiritual question, which manifests our seeing flowers in Unbounded Space with bleary-eyed vision. That the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, has now been correctly Transmitted without a break is what we call seeing flowers in Unbounded space with bleary-eyed vision. Enlightenment, nirvana, giving rise to the intention to realize the Truth, one's own True Nature, and so forth, are two or three petals among the five which the blossoming of Unbounded Space opens up.

5. This is a reference to the Transmission of the Dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha to his disciple Makakashō. This occurred when the Buddha held aloft an udumbara blossom and Makakashō smiled in response.

Shakyamuni Buddha once said in verse:

> *Further, it is like one with bleary-eyed vision*
> *Seeing blossoms in Boundless Space;*
> *When that bleary-eyed sickness is eradicated,*
> *The blossoms disappear into the Unbounded Space.*

There have never been any mundane academics or scholars who have understood this saying. Because they do not know what Unbounded Space is, they do not know what blossoms in Unbounded Space refers to, and because they do not know what blossoms in Unbounded Space refers to, they do not recognize 'one of bleary-eyed vision', nor are they themselves 'one of bleary-eyed vision', nor do they ever become 'one of bleary-eyed vision'. When those of unfocused vision mutually recognize each other, they will know what flowers in Unbounded Space are and they will see the flowering of Unbounded Space. After they have seen the flowers in Unbounded Space, they will also see the flowers disappearing into Unbounded Space.[6] To think that once the flowers have disappeared into Unbounded Space they cannot return again is the view of those of the Lesser Course.*[7] When the flowers within Unbounded Space cannot be seen by such people, what can exist for them? By merely thinking that flowers within Unbounded Space are something to be dropped off, they do not recognize the Great Matter* that lies within the blossoming of Unbounded Space, nor do they know of the seeding, ripening, and falling away of That which blossoms within Unbounded Space.

Among the mundane academics and scholars of today, there are those who think that the yang-energy must govern empty space, and there are those who think that the sun, moon, and stars must be suspended in empty space. Accordingly, they consider what they expediently call 'flowers in empty space' to be something that takes on an appearance and form not unlike that of drifting clouds in the clear sky, or they think it must be like blossoms sent flying in the wind, hither and yon, up and down. They do not know that the four elements—which can create other things and which are, themselves, created—along with the various things of the outer world, as well as such things as one's innate enlightenment and Original Nature, are all called flowers in Unbounded Space. Further, they do not know that the four elements exist to do their creating in accordance with thoughts and things, nor do they know that, in accordance with thoughts and things, the outer world abides in

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6. That is, they will see what 'going beyond Buddhahood' refers to.

7. That is, they believe that one cannot have multiple experiences of realizing Truth, and that once one has realized Truth, the need to train is at an end.

its place. They simply recognize that there are thoughts and things that are in accord with the outer world. They only comprehend that there are flowers in empty space because of one's bleary-eyed vision, and do not comprehend the principle that there is an unfocusing of one's vision due to a blossoming in Unbounded Space.

You need to realize that what the Buddha called 'one with bleary-eyed vision' is one who is fundamentally enlightened, one who is wondrously enlightened, one who is at one with the Buddhas, one who is of the three worlds of existence, one who has gone on beyond Buddhahood. So, do not, out of befuddlement, explore the foolish notion that being 'bleary-eyed' means being deluded and therefore go looking for some other way of progressing. Were you to do so, yours would be a meager view of the Matter. If the blossoming of bleary-eyed vision were a delusion, then that which attaches to the erroneous view that this is an erroneous view, as well as the attachment itself, would both be delusions. If both were delusions, then establishing what the underlying principle is would be impossible. If there were no underlying principle that could be established, then it would be impossible to establish that the blossoming seen by those of bleary-eyed vision is a delusion.

When enlightenment is seen as 'being bleary-eyed', then everything is within enlightenment and all things are bedecked with the quality of being out of focus. When delusion is seen as 'being bleary-eyed', then everything is within delusion and all things are bedecked with the quality of being out of focus. For the present, we can say that when one's bleary vision is impartial, the flowerings within Unbounded Space are impartial, that when bleary-eyed vision has not arisen, a flowering within Unbounded space has not arisen, and that when all thoughts and things have their True Form, bleary-eyed vision has its True Form. You should not get into discussions about past, present, and future, and do not hang onto 'beginning, middle, and end'. By not being hindered by 'arising and disappearing', you can make arisings and disappearings arise and disappear. They arise within Unbounded Space and they disappear within Unbounded Space; they arise within that which is out of focus and they disappear within that which is out of focus; they arise within flowering and they disappear within flowering, and so on, doing the same for all other times and places.

Learning about flowers within Unbounded Space may well take many forms. There is what is seen with bleary-eyed vision, and what is seen with wondrous eyes, and what is seen with the Eye of a Buddha, and what is seen with the eyes of an Ancestor, and what is seen with the vision of the Way, and what is seen with blind eyes, and what has been seen for three thousand years, and what has been

seen for eight hundred years, and what has been seen for hundreds of kalpas,* and what has been seen for immeasurable kalpas.[8] Though it is said that all of these see a flowering in Unbounded Space, Unbounded Space is already of various kinds, and flowering, as well, is of all sorts.

By all means you need to realize that space is simply one form of sprouting. This space invariably produces its flowerings, just as the hundreds of sproutings of thoughts and things produce their flowerings. In asserting this principle, the Tathagata said that Unbounded Space originally had no flowering. Although It originally had no flowering, today It has Its flowerings, just as do the peach and damson trees and just as do the plum and willow trees.[9] It is as if the Tathagata had said, "Although yesterday the plum had no flowers, come the spring, the plum will have flowers." Well and good, for when its season arrives, it will produce flowers, since it will be the time for its flowering and the arriving of its flowering. The actual moment of its flowering is never arbitrary. The flowers of the plum and the willow invariably blossom on plum and willow trees. Upon seeing their flowers, we recognize them as those of the plum and the willow: upon seeing the plum and the willow, we discern what their flowers are. The flowers of the peach and the damson never bloom on plum or willow trees. The flowers of the plum and willow trees bloom on plum and willow trees, whereas the flowers of the peach and damson trees bloom on peach and damson trees. Likewise, the flowers of Unbounded Space bloom in Unbounded Space—they do not bloom on other things that sprout up or upon other trees. By looking at the various forms of the flowers of Unbounded Space, we can estimate that the flowers of Unbounded Space are boundless. By looking at the opening and falling of the flowers in Unbounded Space, you should investigate the spring and autumn of the flowers in Unbounded Space. The springtime for flowers in Unbounded Space and the springtime for other flowers will be alike. Just as the flowers of Unbounded Space are various, so will their springtimes be many. Thus there are the springs and autumns of past and present. Those who have been taught that the flowers of Unbounded Space are not real, though other flowers <u>are</u> real, are persons who have not encountered or heard what the Buddha taught. Upon hearing the Buddha's Teaching that Unbounded Space originally had no flowers, if one were to study this as meaning that there are

8. 'What has been seen for three thousand years…for immeasurable kalpas' refers to what has been experienced by Buddhas since before the time of Shakyamuni Buddha, by Bodhidharma, and by Ancestor after Ancestor at all times, past, present, and future.

9. The peach and damson trees are a common Chinese metaphor for disciples, whereas the plum and the willow represent the most beautiful of flowering trees.

now flowers of Unbounded Space where originally there were none, this would be narrow-minded and short-sighted. We need to step forward and take a more broadminded view.

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Our Ancestral Master Eka once said, "The flowers, moreover, have never appeared." The main point of this is the principle, for example, that the flowers have never appeared, that they have never disappeared, that they have never been 'flowers', and that Unbounded Space has, moreover, never been 'space'. Do not look with suspicion upon what preceded or followed the time of their blossoming, or engage in idle discussions concerning their existence or nonexistence. Flowers invariably seem to be dyed with some color or other, but these various colors are not necessarily limited to flowers. In the various seasons, there are colors such as blue, yellow, red, and white. The spring ushers in flowers, and the flowers usher in spring.

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The highly accomplished Mandarin scholar Ch'ang Cho was a lay disciple of Sekisō Keisho. Upon awakening to the Way, he composed a poem:

> *Its brilliant light serenely illumines everywhere amidst worlds as numerous as the sands of the Ganges.*[10]

This brilliant light has clearly illuminated the Monks' Hall, the Buddha Hall, the kitchen, and the mountain gate to the monastery. 'Everywhere amidst worlds as numerous as the sands of the Ganges' is where the brilliant light manifests and it <u>is</u> a manifestation of the brilliant light.

> *Sentient beings, both the ordinary and the saintly, are within my family.*

It is not that there are no ordinary, everyday people or that there are no wise and saintly ones, but in accord with this, be sure not to speak ill of either ordinary, everyday people or the wise and saintly.

> *When not a single thought arose, Its whole Body manifested Itself.*

10. This is the first line of an eight-line poem, which Dōgen quotes line by line. Each line is followed by his short commentary.

Thought after thought is just one after the other; this is certainly 'non-arising'. This is Its whole body completely manifesting. This is why he said that not a single thought arose.

When my six sense organs moved even slightly, my mind was covered with clouds.

Although the six sense organs are the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind, they are not necessarily a matter of two times three; they can be some group of three, and then three before or after those three.[11] 'Moving' is like Mount Sumeru, like the great earth, like the six sense organs, like moving even slightly. Because moving is already like Mount Sumeru, not moving is also like Mount Sumeru.

Attempting to cut myself free from my defiling passions just added to my heap of spiritual diseases.

It is not that he had never been sick before, for there was the disease of 'Buddha' and the disease of 'Ancestor'.[12] But now, using his perceptiveness to cut off his passions, he piled up his illnesses and increased his sickness. The very moment of cutting oneself free is invariably synonymous with having a passion: they are simultaneous, and they are beyond being simultaneous. Passions are invariably bound up in the measures taken to cut oneself free from them.

To go after the Truth is also the wrong thing.

To turn one's back on Truth is wrong. To confront Truth is wrong. The Truth <u>is</u> the very confronting and the turning of one's back. Each and every instance of 'confronting' and 'turning one's back on' <u>is</u> what Truth is. And who knows that this 'wrong' is also what Truth is?

Submitting myself to worldly connections is not a hindrance.

He submitted himself to one worldly connection after another, for submission after submission is what worldly connections are. This is called 'not being hindered'. As for being hindered or not being hindered, you should accustom yourself to letting your eyes be hindered.

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11. That is, the sense organs are not necessarily just the standard six (two times three), but may manifest in countless ways.

12. That is, the spiritual greed to become a Buddha or an Ancestor.

Nirvana and birth-and-death are simply flowers in Unbounded Space.

Nirvana is synonymous with supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. This is where the Buddhas and Ancestors reside, along with Their disciples. Birth-and-death is synonymous with one's True Body. Nirvana and birth-and-death exist in this manner and they are flowers in Unbounded Space. The roots and stems, the branches and leaves, the flowers and fruit, along with the brilliance and forms of the flowers of Unbounded Space, are all the blossoming forth of flowers in Unbounded Space. They are invariably connected with the fruits of Unbounded Space, which bestow the seeds of Unbounded Space. Because the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form, which we are now experiencing, are the opening of the five petals, it is best to see these three worlds as the three worlds. You need to explore through your training that the three worlds are the true form of all thoughts and things, that they are the flowering of all thoughts and things. All thoughts and things beyond measure are the flowers of Unbounded Space and the fruits of Unbounded Space, and they are identical with the flowers of plum and willow, peach and damson.

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When Meditation Master Fuyōzan Reikun in the Fuchou district of Great Sung China first came to train under Meditation Master Kisu Shishin, he asked his Master, "Just what is Buddha?"

Master Kisu replied, "If I tell you straight to your face, will you believe me?"

Reikun then said, "How would I dare not to believe your sincere words, O Venerable Monk?"

Master Kiso responded, "You yourself are precisely what It is."

Reikun then asked, "How am I to preserve and maintain It?"

Master Kiso answered, "When there is a single moment of your eyes being bleary, the flowers of Unbounded Space will come fluttering down."

The words that Master Kisu has just spoken, namely, "When there is a single moment of your eyes being bleary, the flowers of Unbounded Space will come fluttering down," express how Buddha is preserved and maintained. So, you need to realize that the fluttering down of the flowers of bleary-eyed vision is what all Buddhas manifest. By seeing the flowering and fruiting of Unbounded Space which Their Eye, all Buddhas preserve and maintain these flowers and fruit. By means of Their bleary-eyed vision, They cause the Eye to manifest. They have

manifested the flowering of Unbounded Space within Their Eye and They have manifested Their Eye within the flowering of Unbounded Space. It is simply a matter of "When the flower of Unbounded Space is within Their Eye, a single moment of bleary-eyed vision flutters down, and when Their Eye is within Unbounded Space, all instances of bleary-eyed vision flutter down." Thus, bleary-eyed vision is a manifestation of all functions, and the Eye is also a manifestation of all functions, and Unbounded Space is also a manifestation of all functions, and flowering is also a manifestation of all functions. 'Fluttering down' is synonymous with 'thousands of Eyes' and with 'our whole body being covered with eyes'.[13] In short, at the time and place when the single Eye occurs, there will invariably be a blossoming in Unbounded Space along with the blossoming of that Eye. We call the blossoming of one's Eye 'flowers in Unbounded Space'. The expression 'the blossoming of one's Eye' is invariably synonymous with opening to the luminous, that is, to enlightenment.

This is why Great Master Rōya Ekaku said in a poem,

How wondrous the Buddhas in the ten quarters are!
From the first, They have been flowers in your Eye.
If you desire to make the acquaintance of the flowers in your Eye,
They are, of course, the Buddhas in the ten quarters.

If you desire to make the acquaintance of the Buddhas in the ten quarters, They will not be flowers in your eyes.
If you desire to make the acquaintance of the flowers in your eyes, they will not be the Buddhas in the ten quarters.
When you understand this clearly,
The blame will lie with the Buddhas in the ten quarters.

When this is not yet clearly understood,
Shravakas are prone to dance
And pratyekabuddhas take to adorning themselves.[14]

13. Dōgen explores these references to 'thousands of Eyes' and to 'being covered with eyes' in his Discourse 32: On Kannon, the Bodhisattva of Compassion *(Kannon)*.

14. To paraphrase the end part, when you understand clearly the difference between 'flowers in one's eyes' (delusion) and 'flowers in one's Eye' (enlightenment), it will be due to the

Keep in mind that the Buddhas of the ten quarters are not unreal, but, from the first, They are flowers in our Eye. The place where the Buddhas of the ten quarters abide is within our Eye. If They were not within our Eye, then our Eye would not be the abiding place of Buddhas. The flowers in our Eye are neither non-existent nor existent, and they are beyond emptiness and reality: they are naturally what the Buddhas in the ten quarters are. If you earnestly desire to be acquainted with the Buddhas in the ten quarters, They are beyond being just 'flowers in your eyes', and if you earnestly desire to be acquainted with what the flowers in your eyes are, they will seem to be something other than the Buddhas in the ten quarters.

Because the Matter is like this, both your being clear and your not yet being clear are flowers in your Eye and they are also the Buddhas in the ten quarters. Your desire to be acquainted with what They are and what They are not is the Wondrous manifesting Itself, and It is a great wonder. The main point about the flowers of Unbounded Space and the flowers of the earth, of which Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor have spoken, is Their giving free rein to Their elegantly skillful means. Even though academic teachers of Scriptures and scholars who produce erudite commentaries thereon are able to hear the words 'flowers in Unbounded Space', there is no account of anyone, apart from an Ancestor of the Buddha, who has ever encountered, or even heard of, the Lifeblood of the flowers of the earth. And there are the sayings of the Buddha's Ancestors who have understood what the Lifeblood of the flowers of the earth really is.

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Meditation Master Etetsu of Mount Sekimon in Great Sung China was a venerable elder who had trained under Ryōzan Enkan. One day a certain monk asked him, "What is the Jewel in the Mountain?" The main point of asking this is the same as asking, "What <u>is</u> Buddha?" or like asking, "What is the Way?" The Master replied, "The flowers of Unbounded Space come forth from the earth, so, throughout the country, there is no way to buy them."

Buddhas in the ten quarters (their 'fault'). As used here, the term shravakas refers to those who enjoy hearing the Teaching but are not necessarily interested in Its practical application, believing that they are already enlightened because they have an intellectual understanding of the Teaching, and therefore they jump for joy. On the other hand, pratyekabuddhas are those who are seeking enlightenment, but just for their own sake. When they believe that they have fully fathomed enlightenment, they wear their understanding as a badge of their achievement.

In all earnestness, you must not compare this saying with other expressions. Ordinary, mundane teachers, in discussing the flowers of Unbounded Space as ‘flowers in the empty sky’, speak only of their arising in the empty sky and disappearing into the empty sky. Since they have still not understood what ‘reliance on Unbounded Space’ means, how could they possibly understand what ‘reliance on the earth’ means? Only Sekimon knew this. ‘Reliance on the earth’ is ultimately relying on the earth through and through—beginning, middle, and end. His phrase ‘coming forth’ is synonymous with ‘opening up’. That very moment is the flowers’ coming forth from the whole of the great earth; it is their opening up over the whole of the great earth.

‘Throughout the country there is no way to buy them’ does not mean that there is nothing to buy throughout the country, but that there is no way to buy the Truth. There are the flowers of Unbounded Space which are based on coming forth from the earth, and there is the whole earth which is based on the opening of flowers. So, keep in mind this main point: the flowers of Unbounded Space cause both the opening up of the earth and the unfolding of Unbounded Space.

Given to the assembly on the tenth day of the third lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (March 31, 1243) at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple.

Copied by me on the first day of the first lunar month in the second year of the same era (February 10, 1244), while in the quarters of the Abbot’s assistant at Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province.

Ejō

45

On What the Mind of an Old Buddha Is

(Kobusshin)

Translator's Introduction: The Japanese term *'kobutsu'*, rendered herein as 'an Old Buddha', occurs often in Zen writings. It refers to one who has fully realized his or her True Nature and therefore has the Mind of an Old Buddha.

In the succession of the Dharma in our Ancestral tradition, there were forty Ancestors from the Seven Buddhas* down to Daikan Enō, and from Daikan Enō back to the Seven Buddhas there were forty Buddhas.[1] Because the Seven Buddhas equally had the merit of having realized enlightenment and of having turned back to help the world, the inherited Dharma extended forward to Enō and was traceable back to the Seven Buddhas. Because Enō had the merit of having realized enlightenment and of having turned back to help the world, It has been genuinely Transmitted from the Seven Buddhas, and It has been genuinely Transmitted from Enō, and It has been genuinely Transmitted to later Buddhas. It is not merely a question of who has preceded or has followed whom; the time of Shakyamuni Buddha is that of all the Buddhas in the ten quarters. During Seigen's time there was Nangaku, and during Nangaku's time there was Seigen. And during the time of Seigen's heir Sekitō, there was Nangaku's heir Baso. They did not stand against each other, nor was it a matter of their not standing against each other. You need to thoroughly explore through your training that there was such meritorious behavior as this.[2]

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* See *Glossary*.

1. Dōgen goes only as far as the Sixth Chinese Ancestor, Daikan Enō, because he was the first to have two Dharma heirs, Seigen Gyōshi and Nangaku Ejō. Dōgen's Sōtō lineage derives from Seigen, whereas the other Zen lineages, such as the Rinzai, trace their ancestry back to Nangaku.

2. That is, it goes beyond a matter of choosing between the pairs by thinking that one is right and the other wrong, or of not choosing between them by not committing oneself to one of the two traditions.

Their having passed away long ago and Their not having completely passed away are both the meritorious deeds of Old Buddhas. Through our training with our Master, we explore the words and ways of Old Buddhas so that we may awaken to the Truth of Old Buddhas, for They are Old Buddhas for generation after generation. Even though the 'old' of 'Old Buddhas' is the same as that in 'new and old', such Buddhas have gone beyond what is past and what is present; They stand squarely in both the past and the present.

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My late Master once said, "I had an encounter with the Old Buddha Wanshi."[3] Clearly recognize that there was an Old Buddha residing under Tendō's roof, and there was a Tendō residing under the roof of an Old Buddha.

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Meditation Master Engo once said, "I fully prostrate myself before Daikan Enō, a true Old Buddha." You need to know that you too should do a full prostration to Daikan Enō, our Ancestor of the thirty-third generation from Shakyamuni Buddha, for he is indeed an Old Buddha. Because Meditation Master Engo had the splendorous brightness of an Old Buddha, he had an encounter with an Old Buddha, which is why he made such a respectful bow. Accordingly, you need to know that when he relied on Enō's being a Buddha from head-to-toe as spiritual 'fodder', this was the Old Buddha's way of getting hold of the water buffalo's nose ring, for anyone who has hold of this nose ring is an Old Buddha.[4]

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Sozan once said,[5] "Atop Daiyū Peak there is an Old Buddha. The radiance that He emits illumines this place of ours." You need to realize that what Sozan is

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3. Wanshi, who was once the Abbot of Mount Tendō, had died five years before Dōgen's Master, Tendō Nyojō, who was also an Abbot of Mount Tendō, was born. 'To have an encounter' with a Master refers to the mutual recognition between two people that each is 'such a person', that is, someone who has spiritually awakened.

4. 'Getting hold of the water buffalo's nose ring' is a reference to getting a handle on one's spiritual question, and is an image found in the classic Zen Buddhist *Ten Ox-herding Pictures*.

5. Sozan Kōnin, not to be confused with Sōzan Honjaku, both of whom were disciples of Tōzan Ryōkai.

saying is that he had already had an encounter with an Old Buddha. He did not have to seek elsewhere, for the place where his Old Buddha resided was atop Daiyū Peak. Those who are not an Old Buddha cannot recognize the place where an Old Buddha resides. Those who know the place where an Old Buddha resides will be an Old Buddha themselves.

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Seppō once exclaimed, "Jōshū, the Old Buddha!" Keep in mind that even though Jōshū was an Old Buddha, if Seppō had not also experienced the abilities of an Old Buddha for himself, it would have been difficult for him to fully comprehend how to pay homage to an Old Buddha. Well, Seppō was an Old Buddha himself. In his daily conduct, he depended upon his spiritual abilities as an Old Buddha while he did his explorations into 'an Old Buddha'. And in doing so, he did not need to go looking for answers from others nor did he engage in conversing about such things. In other words, that old fellow Seppō was just fine! The day-to-day customs of an Old Buddha and the everyday behavior of an Old Buddha do not resemble those of someone who is not an Old Buddha, for the latter are simply not first class. As a consequence, you should explore through your training from start to finish just what sort of conduct Jōshū found to be good, and you should explore through your training what the lifetime of an Old Buddha is.

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The National Teacher Echū of Kōtaku-ji Temple in the Western Capital was a Dharma heir of Daikan Enō.[6] He was respected and esteemed by both worldly and celestial emperors alike. Even in China, to encounter or hear of the likes of such a one was truly rare. Not only was he the teacher of four imperial generations, but the emperors themselves pulled his carriage to the imperial court with their own hands. And what is more, having been invited to the celestial palace of Lord Indra, he ascended far into the Trayastrimsha Heavens where he gave voice to the Dharma for the sake of the celestial emperor and others of the celestial multitudes.

The National Teacher was once asked by a monk, "Just what is an Old Buddha?"

He replied, "The tiles* and stones of His walls and fences."

In other words, the question is stating, in effect, "I am 'such a one'* and you are 'such a one.'" The monk has taken this statement of the Truth and turned it into

6. Although National Teacher Echū was a Dharma heir of Daikan Enō and had two Dharma heirs of his own, his line ultimately died out.

a question. And this question has become an assertion of the Truth far and wide, in both the past and present.[7]

Consequently, a response such as, "The myriad trees and the hundreds of sproutings are blossomings of the Flower" is an assertion of the Truth by an Old Buddha. And the response, "The nine mountains and eight oceans that are the arising of our world" is the face of the Sun and the face of the Moon for an Old Buddha, just as Bodhidharma's response, "You have my Skin, Flesh, Bones, and Marrow," is also the countenance of the Sun and Moon for an Old Buddha. Moreover, there will be 'the Mind of Old', which is a Buddha doing His practice, and there will be 'the Mind of Old', which is His realizing Buddhahood, and there will be the 'oldness' of a Buddha, which is what is in His mind.[8] We call it 'the Mind of Old' because of the 'oldness' of the Mind. Because Mind and Buddha are positively 'old', the Mind of Old is synonymous with a chair, as well as with bamboo and trees.[9] It is synonymous with the saying, "It is impossible to find anyone who understands one bit of the Buddha Dharma, even though one may search the whole of the great earth." And it is synonymous with a Master calling It 'the What' in response to a monk asking, "What is It?" The causes and conditions of this very moment, as well as the various lands and empty space, are nothing other than the Mind of Old, for they maintain and depend on the Mind of Old, and they maintain and depend on Buddhas of old. They maintain and depend upon two heads having one countenance and on having two heads in one picture.[10]

The National Teacher replied to the monk, "The tiles and stones of his walls and fences."

In other words, his main point is that there is a way of proceeding that is expressed as 'the tiles and stones of one's walls and fences', and there is a way of

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7. That is, what the monk said could be understood not merely as a question but also as an statement: it is the 'What' that is what an Old Buddha is. This double use of the word 'what' has already occurred in several kōan stories that Dōgen presented earlier.

8. What is in the mind of an Old Buddha is His or Her accumulated wisdom based on spiritual experience.

9. In Dōgen's day and even earlier in China, the only chair in a Zen monastery or temple was that which served as the Dharma seat from which the Master gave the Teaching. Bamboo and various trees are also often used as metaphors for the Buddha Mind.

10. Two heads having one countenance refers to a picture of Shakyamuni Buddha which depicts Him as being seated in meditation with another head appearing atop His own. The second head represents That upon which Shakyamuni Buddha is meditating, that is, it represents Vairochana Buddha.

proceeding that is the tiles and stones of one's walls and fences. And there will be yet another way of putting forth the Truth. And there is a way of pulling back whereby the tiles and stones of the walls and fences speak from within the tiles and stones of our walls and fences. In the full perfection and completeness from which these ways of expressing the Matter* fully manifest before our very eyes, there are walls rising up a thousand or ten thousand feet, and there are fences rising up that encircle the earth and encircle the heavens, and there is the covering up of the tiles all the way or half the way, and there are the sharp edges of the stones, both big and small. What exists like this is not only our minds but also our bodies, including both our innate tendencies and our external conditions.

Thus, you should ask, "What, pray, are the tiles and stones of my walls and fences?" and you should also state what they are. And if you should enter into a colloquy with your Master about this question, the reply should be "The Mind of an Old Buddha." In maintaining and depending on the Matter in this way, you should also thoroughly explore through your training with your Master just what your walls and fences are, what you acknowledge your walls and fences to be, and just what forms and stages they are taking now. The following questions also need to be thoroughly explored, and in detail. Do you produce your walls and fences by building them up, or do your walls and fences bring forth their own building up? Are they deliberately built up or not? Do you treat them as something sentient, or as something non-sentient? Do they manifest before your very eyes or not? When you make an effort to explore the Matter through training in this way, the Mind of the Old Buddha—whether It exists in the celestial worlds above or among humankind, or has manifested Itself in this land or in other lands—will be the tiles and stones of your walls and fences. Not a single mote of dust has ever yet stuck out its head to taint It.

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> Great Master Zengen Chūkō was once asked by a monk, "Just what is the mind of an old Buddha?"
>
> The Master responded, "His mind's world has caved in."
>
> The monk then asked, "Why has his mind's world caved in?"
>
> The Master replied, "Would you prefer that I put the Matter as 'he no longer has a self of his own?'"[11]

11. What this kōan story and Dōgen's subsequent commentary point to is that becoming an Old Buddha means letting the 'world' that one's intellect (lower case 'mind') has created collapse, which includes letting go of the notion of a separate, unchanging, permanent 'self',

As to the 'world' of which he spoke, the ten directions all together comprise the world of a Buddha. And there has never yet been a world devoid of Buddha. As to the form and stages of caving in, you should explore the whole of this world in all ten quarters. Do not study 'the world's caving in' as being yourself, because in the course of training you do not explore it as your self.[12]

As to the very moment of your caving in, will you experience it as one thing or two things, or as three, four, or five things? It is inexhaustible things! Whatever these things may be, the Matter will be one that Zengen preferred to put as 'not having a self of one's own'. A 'self' is what an Old Buddha prefers not holding on to. Do not selfishly begrudge this very moment and fail to transform your own self into the Mind of an Old Buddha.

Truly, prior to the Seven Buddhas, the Mind of the Old Buddha stood erect as a wall; after the Seven Buddhas, the Mind of the Old Buddha put forth sprouts. Prior to all the Buddhas, the Mind of the Old Buddha blossomed; after all the Buddhas, the Mind of the Old Buddha bore fruit. Prior to the Mind of the Old Buddha arising, 'the mind of an old Buddha' has dropped off.

Delivered to the assembly on the twenty-ninth day of the fourth lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (May 19, 1243) at the Temple of the Six Paramitas.[13]

Copied by me on the twelfth day of the fifth lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (June 18, 1244) in the office of the Abbot's assistant in the hermitage below Kippō Peak.

Ejō

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as one lets go of a sense of being separate from one's Buddha Nature. In the story, the monk is apparently a novice who has not yet clarified the difference between mind (intellect) and Mind (one's Buddha Nature) or between an old Buddha (a long-dead historical figure) and an Old Buddha (one who has realized Truth).

12. That is, to explore it as your 'self' is simply a matter of the intellect exploring the concept of a self, a concept which the intellect has created in the first place.

13. This temple is in Kyōto near the government office of one of Dōgen's chief supporters.

46

On the Four Exemplary Acts of a Bodhisattva

(Bodaisatta Shishōbō)

Translator's Introduction: The four exemplary acts are also known as the four wisdoms: charity, tenderness, benevolence, and sympathy.

The first is offering alms.
The second is using kindly speech.
The third is showing benevolence.
The fourth is manifesting sympathy.

Offering alms means not being covetous. Not being covetous means not being greedy. Not being greedy, to put it in worldly terms, includes not currying favors by groveling or flattery. If we want to bestow the Teaching of the Genuine Way, even if it were upon someone who rules over the four continents, we must do it without wanting anything in return. Offering alms, for example, is like bestowing upon strangers wealth that we freely part with. Were we to offer to the Tathagata flowers from a far-off mountain or give to some sentient being a treasure coming from a previous life—be it Dharma or something material—in either case, the act would be endowed with the merit that accords with the offering of alms. There is the principle that even though such things are not something that we personally own, it does not hinder our offering them as alms.[1] And the humbleness of such offerings is not to be despised, for it is the sincerity of these meritorious deeds that counts.

When we leave the Way to the Way, we realize the Way. When we realize the Way, the Way will invariably continue to be left to the Way. When treasures are left to being treasures, such treasures will invariably end up as alms offerings. We bestow 'self' on ourselves, and we bestow 'other' on others. The influence of this offering of alms not only penetrates far into the realms of those in lofty positions and of those who are ordinary people, but also permeates the realms of the wise

1. This refers to the giving of something that does not have any owner, such as the Dharma, or the grains of sand on a beach which a child once offered. These types of offering are beyond the concept of 'ownership'.

and the saintly. This is because when people have become capable of accepting an offering of alms, they have therefore already formed a link with the donor.

The Buddha once remarked, "When a donor comes into a monastic assembly, others admire that person right from the start. You should realize that they have tacitly understood the heart of that person." As a consequence, should we offer only one sentence or one verse of the Dharma as alms, it will become a good seed in this life and in future lives. Should we offer the gift of even a single coin or a single blade of grass as alms, it will sprout good roots in this generation and in future generations. Dharma can be wealth and wealth can be Dharma—which it is depends on our wish and our pleasure.

Truly, bestowing one's beard on another once put someone's mind in order, and an offering of a few grains of sand once gained someone the rank of king.[2] These people did not covet some reward, but simply shared what they had. Providing a ferry or building a bridge as an alms offering creates a way to the Other Shore. When we have learned well what the offering of alms means, then we can see that accepting oneself and letting go of oneself are both offerings of alms. Earning a living and doing productive work have never been anything other than an offering of alms. Leaving flowers to float upon the wind and leaving birds to sing in their season will also be meritorious training in almsgiving. Upon his deathbed, the great King Ashoka offered half of a mango to several hundred monks as alms. As persons who are capable of accepting alms, we need to explore well the principle that this great alms gift points to. Not only should we make physical efforts to give alms, but we should also not overlook opportunities to do so. Truly, because we have inherited the merit from having given alms in past lives, we have obtained the human body that we now have. "Even if you give alms to yourselves, there can be merit, and how much more so were you to give alms to your parents, spouse, or children!" As a consequence of this statement, I have realized that even giving to oneself is a part of almsgiving, and giving to one's parents, spouse, or children will be almsgiving as well. Should we let go of a single dust mote of defiling passion as an alms offering, even though it is done for our own sake, we will feel a quiet, heartfelt gratitude because we will have had one of the

2. During the T'ang dynasty, when an officer in the court of Emperor T'ai-tsung fell ill and needed the ashes from a beard for medicine, the emperor burnt his own beard and offered the ashes to the officer. Once when the Buddha was on an alms round, a child who was playing in the sand put a few grains in the Buddha's alms bowl as an offering, and, due to this act, the child was later reborn as King Ashoka.

meritorious deeds of Buddhas genuinely Transmitted to us, and because, for the first time, we will be practicing one of the methods of bodhisattvas.*

What is truly hard to turn around is the heart and mind of sentient beings. By making one offering, we begin to turn their mental state around, after which we hope to keep turning it around until they realize the Way. From this beginning, we should by all means continue to assist them by making alms offerings. This is why the first of the Six Paramitas is the Almsgiving Paramita.[3] The size of any mind is beyond measure: the size of any thing is also beyond measure. Be that as it may, there are times when the mind turns things around and there is also the practice of almsgiving, whereby things turn the mind around.

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Kindly speech means that when we encounter sentient beings, we first of all give rise to feelings of genuine affection for them and offer them words that express our pleasure in knowing them. To put it more broadly, we do not use language that is harsh or rude. Even in secular society there are respectful customs for asking others how they are; in Buddhism there is the Master's phrase, "May you take good care of yourself," and there is the disciple's greeting, "I have been wondering how you've been doing." To speak with a feeling of genuine affection for sentient beings, as if they were still new-born babes, is what kindly speech is. We should praise those who have virtue and pity those who do not.

Through our having fondness for kindly speech, kindly speech gradually increases. Thus, even kindly speech that goes unrecognized or unnoticed will still manifest itself right before us. While our present life persists, we should become fond of speaking kindly, so that we do not regress or turn away from it for generation after generation and for life after life. Kindly speech is the foundation for overcoming those who are angry and hostile, as well as for promoting harmony among others. When we hear kindly speech that is spoken directly to us, it brightens our countenance and delights our heart. When we hear of kind speech having been spoken about us in our absence, this makes a deep impression on our heart and our spirit. Keep in mind that kindly speech arises from a loving heart, and a loving heart makes compassion its seed. You should explore the idea that

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* See *Glossary.*

3. A paramita is a practice that Buddhas and bodhisattvas employ to help sentient beings reach the Other Shore. The six are almsgiving, observance of the Precepts, patient forbearance, diligence, being well-seated in one's meditation, and wise discernment.

kindly speech can have the power to turn the very heavens around, and it is not merely a matter of praising someone's abilities.

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Showing benevolence means working out skillful methods by which to benefit sentient beings, be they of high or low station. One may do this, for instance, by looking at someone's future prospects, both immediate and far-ranging, and then practicing skillful means to help that person. Someone once took pity on a stricken turtle and another once tended to a sick sparrow.[4] Neither of these people was seeking a reward; they simply acted from a feeling of benevolence.

Some people may foolishly think that if they were to put the welfare of others first, their own benefits would be reduced. This is not so. Benevolence is all-encompassing, universally benefiting both self and others. A person long ago bound up his hair three times during the course of his taking a single bath, and thrice spat out what he had in his mouth during the course of a single meal. And he did so solely from a heart that would benefit others. He was not reluctant to instruct his son to do so, if his son should encounter guests from a foreign land.[5] So, we should act to benefit equally both those who are hostile and those who are friendly, and act for the benefit of both self and other alike. When we attain such an attitude of mind, our showing of benevolence will neither retreat nor turn away from anything, and this benevolence will be shown even towards grass and trees, wind and water. And, in all humility, we should engage ourselves in helping those who are given to foolishness.

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4. There is a classic Chinese story in which a man rescued a trapped turtle. As the turtle swam off, it looked back over its shoulder to its benefactor, as if to acknowledge its indebtedness. Later, the man rose to a high official position, and, when the seal of his office was cast, it miraculously appeared in the form of a turtle looking over its back. No matter how many times the seal was recast to remove the form, it would nevertheless reappear on the seal. Finally, the man realized that somehow the turtle had played a part in his having received his appointment, so he kept the strange seal out of gratitude.

   In another classic Chinese story, there was a boy who helped a sick sparrow recover and to whom the sparrow gave four silver rings as recompense, which ultimately led to the boy's being appointed to three high government positions.

5. A Chinese ruler once advised his son that if three guests were to come calling in succession while he was bathing, he should bind up his hair each time and go to greet them, and if three guests were to come calling in succession while he was dining, he should stop eating each time in order to greet them.

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Manifesting sympathy means not making differences, not treating yourself as different and not treating others as different. For instance, the Tathagata was a human being just like other human beings. From His being the same as those in the human world, we know that He must have been the same as those in any other world. When we really understand what manifesting sympathy means, we will see that self and other are one and the same. Music, poetry, and wine have been companions for ordinary people, companions for those in lofty positions, and companions for the hosts of celestial beings. And there is the principle that ordinary people have been companions for music, poetry, and wine. And music, poetry, and wine have been companions for music, poetry, and wine. And ordinary people have been companions for ordinary people. And those in lofty positions have been companions for those in lofty positions. And celestial beings have been companions for celestial beings. This is what studying 'manifesting sympathy' means.

In particular, what the 'manifesting' in manifesting sympathy refers to is our ways of behaving, our everyday actions, and our attitudes of mind. In this manifesting, there will be the principle of letting people identify with us and of letting ourselves identify with others. Depending on the occasion, there are no boundaries between self and other.

It says in the *Kuan-tsu,*[6] "A sea does not reject water, and therefore is able to bring about its vastness. A mountain does not reject soil, and therefore can bring about its height. An enlightened ruler does not despise ordinary people, and therefore can bring about a large populace." You need to realize that a sea's not rejecting water is its being in sympathy with water. Further, you need to realize that the water has the complete virtue of not refusing the sea. For that reason, it is possible for waters to come together and form a sea, and for earth to pile up and form a mountain. And you certainly know for yourself that because one sea does not reject another sea, it forms an ocean, which is something much bigger. And because one mountain does not reject another mountain, it forms a larger mountain, which is something much higher. And because an enlightened ruler does not despise ordinary people, he creates a large populace. A large populace means a nation. An enlightened ruler means an emperor. An emperor does not despise people. And even though he does not despise people, it does not mean that there are no rewards and punishments. And even though there are rewards and

6. A multi-volumed Chinese Taoist work.

punishments, they do not come about because he despises people. Long ago, when people were submissive, nations were without rewards or punishments—at least to the extent that rewards and punishments then were not the same as those of today. Even today, there may be people who seek the Way without expecting any reward, but this is beyond what foolish people concern themselves with. Because an enlightened ruler is clear-minded, he does not despise people. Although people invariably form nations and try to seek out an enlightened leader, nevertheless those who completely understand the principle of what makes an enlightened ruler 'enlightened' are rare. As a result, even though they are happy enough about not being despised by an enlightened ruler, they do not comprehend that they mutually should not despise their enlightened ruler. As a consequence, there is the principle of manifesting sympathy which is for both enlightened rulers and unenlightened people. This is why bodhisattvas vow to practice manifesting sympathy. And to do so, they need but face all things with a gentle demeanor.

Because each of these four exemplary acts completely encompasses all four exemplary acts, there will be, all told, sixteen exemplary acts.

Written down on the day of the Tango Festival in the fourth year of the Ninji era (May 24, 1243).

Written by the mendicant monk Dōgen
who entered Sung China and received
the Transmission of the Dharma

47

On the Vines That Entangle: the Vines That Embrace

(Kattō)

Translator's Introduction: The term '*kattō'* literally means 'the kudzu and the wisteria', and it refers to two vines that grow by wrapping themselves around, say, a tree or a post. While the term serves as a common metaphor in both secular and Buddhist writings with the negative connotation of 'complications', 'difficulties', and 'that which we get entangled with', Dōgen extends its meaning in this discourse to describe, in a positive sense, the complex and complicated intertwining of the Master-disciple relationship.

Shakyamuni Buddha, who experienced the great, unsurpassed enlightenment, passed on the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching only to Great Master Makakashō from amongst all of the assembly on the Divine Vulture Peak. Successor after successor experienced this genuine realization of the Truth, and It ultimately came down to the Venerable Bodhidharma in the twenty-eight generation. Following the example of the Ancestors, whilst Bodhidharma was in China he passed on the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching to our Great Ancestor Eka, the fully awakened Great Master of the genuine lineage, thereby making him the Second Chinese Ancestor. The Twenty-eighth Ancestor, who was the first in China to act in accord with the behavior of the Ancestors, is called the First Chinese Ancestor, whereas Eka, as the Ancestor of the twenty-ninth generation, is called the Second Chinese Ancestor, as is the custom in the lands east of India.

After Bodhidharma had spiritually awakened, he received the Transmission of the very Marrow of the Buddha's instructions from the Venerable Hannyatara. Bodhidharma subsequently came to recognize the roots of his delusions because of these very roots, which he had previously used as the foundation for the proliferation of his delusions.

Generally speaking, the saintly all devise some method of training whereby they sever the roots of whatever vines are entangling them. But they might not explore how to cut off entangling vines by using the very vines themselves, for they may not have used these embracing vines as the means to understand their being entangled. So how could they possibly understand the inheriting of vines and the succession of vines by means of these embracing vines? It is rare for any to

recognize that the inheritance of the Dharma is synonymous with embracing vines, and, since none of them have heard about it, none have yet expressed it this way. Surely, there could not possibly be many who have experienced it!

My former Master, an Old Buddha, once said, "The vines of the bottle gourd embrace the bottle gourd itself." This teaching that he gave to his assembly is something that had never been encountered or heard of anywhere in the past or present. The vines of the bottle gourd intertwining with the vines of the bottle gourd is the Buddhas and Ancestors thoroughly exploring what Buddhas and Ancestors are. It is the Buddhas and Ancestors realizing that there is no difference between the awakening of a Buddha and the awakening of an Ancestor. It has been referred to as the direct Transmission of the Dharma from Mind to Mind.

In speaking to his disciples, our Twenty-eighth Ancestor Bodhidharma said, "It seems that my time is near at hand, so why don't you express what you have realized?"

His disciple Dōfuku then said, "As I now see things, I am not attached to words nor have I given up words. I just make use of them."

The Ancestor replied, "You have realized what my Skin is."

The female monk Sōji said, "As I now understand things, it is like Ananda's catching sight of Akshobya's Buddha Land. Once seen, it is not seen again."

The Ancestor replied, "You have realized what my Flesh is."

Dōiku said, "The four elements,* from the first, are empty of any permanent self-nature, and the five skandhas* lack permanent existence. So, from my perspective, there is not one single thing to be realized."

The Ancestor replied, "You have realized what my Bones are."

Finally, Eka respectfully made three prostrations before the Ancestor and then silently stood in his place.

The Ancestor said, "You have realized what my Marrow is." As might be expected, he made Eka the Second Chinese Ancestor, Transmitting to him the Dharma and the kesa.*

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* See *Glossary.*

What you need to explore through your training is that our First Chinese Ancestor's statement, "You have realized my Skin, Flesh, Bones, and Marrow," is what the Ancestor said. Each of his four disciples, respectively, expressed what they had realized; each demonstrated what they had learned. What they all had realized is the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow which sprang forth from their own body and mind. It is the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of 'dropping off body and mind'. This is beyond anything that someone can gather from an Ancestral Master by means of intellectual understanding based on observation, which is simply comparable to one move in a game of *Go*. Likewise, it is not something that fully manifests before one's eyes as subject and object, or as this and that. At the same time, folks who have not experienced the genuine Transmission fancy that there were relative degrees of intimacy in what each of the four disciples comprehended, so that what the Ancestor was saying was that skin, flesh, bones, and marrow are not the same in their profundity. They think that skin and flesh are coarser than bones and marrow, and they say that the discerning thought of the Second Ancestor had surpassed that of the others, so that he alone obtained the certification of knowing what the marrow was. Those who talk like this have still not explored through their training what the Buddhas and Ancestors are, nor have they experienced the genuine Transmission of which the Ancestors speak.

You need to recognize that the Skin, Flesh, Bones, and Marrow of which the Ancestor spoke are beyond being characterized as shallow or deep. Even though people's intellectual abilities may be superior or inferior, what the Ancestor said is simply a matter of the disciple's having realized 'what I truly am'. The fundamental principle here is that, in his saying to one disciple "You have realized what my Marrow is" while saying to another "You have realized what my Bones are," these statements are both beyond a matter of adequacy or inadequacy when it comes to giving spiritual guidance to people, or when 'pulling up one's weeds and then letting go of them'. For instance, it is like the Buddha's raising the flower or passing on His kesa.[1] What was uttered for the sake of the four disciples was, to begin with, essentially one and the same thing. And even though what the Ancestor said to each was essentially one and the same thing, this does not necessarily mean that their four understandings were essentially one and the same. Even though their

1. The first reference is to the Transmission of Makakashō, wherein the Buddha raised a flower and Makakashō, realizing the deeper meaning behind the gesture, broke into a smile, which set the Buddha's eyes to twinkling in recognition. The second reference is to the Buddha's passing on His kesa to Makakashō when confirming him as His Dharma heir.

four understandings were individually distinct, what the Ancestor said is simply what the Ancestor said.

Generally speaking, what is said and what is understood may not necessarily be identical. For instance, in expressing the Matter* to his four disciples, the Ancestral Master was asserting, "You have realized me as 'Me in the flesh.'" Even if there were a hundred thousand disciples after the Second Ancestor, there would be a hundred thousand ways of stating It, for the ways are inexhaustible. Since there were only four disciples to hear what he said, there were, for the moment, just the four expressions of 'Skin', 'Flesh', 'Bones', and 'Marrow', but there remain ways that were not yet expressed, for there are many ways to express the Matter.

You need to realize that even though Bodhidharma expressed the Dharma in the way he did for the sake of the Second Ancestor, he could also have expressed It as "You have realized what my Skin is." Even if he had said to Eka, "You have realized what my Skin is," the First Ancestor would have been Transmitting the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching to him as the Second Ancestor, since 'realizing what the Skin is' and 'realizing what the Marrow is' are not based on either being superior or inferior.

Also, in expressing the Dharma in the way he did for the sake of Dōfuku, Dōiku, Sōji, or anyone else, he could have stated, "You have realized what my Marrow is." Even though he may say 'what my Skin is' to them, he will still be Transmitting the Teaching to them. The Body and Mind of the Ancestral Master is the Ancestral Master along with his skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. This is beyond considering the marrow to be an intimate part of him while viewing the skin as something distant from him.

Now, when someone who has an eye for exploring the Matter through training with a Master receives the certification of "You have realized what my Skin is," it is the result of that person's taking their training to the utmost, which 'gets' him or her the Ancestral Master. There are Ancestral Masters whose whole being is Skin, and Ancestral Masters whose whole being is Flesh, and Ancestral Masters whose whole being is Bones, and Ancestral Masters whose whole being is Marrow. And there are Ancestral Masters whose whole being is Mind, and Ancestral Masters whose whole being is Body, and Ancestral Masters whose whole mind is Mind, and Ancestral Masters who are Ancestral Masters through and through, and Ancestral Masters whose whole being 'has realized my You', and so

on.[2] If there were a time when these Ancestral Masters appeared simultaneously and expressed the Dharma for the sake of a hundred thousand disciples, they might voice It as "You have realized my Skin." Even if their hundred thousand ways of voicing It were 'Skin, Flesh, Bones, and Marrow', bystanders and onlookers will vainly assume that these Masters are literally talking about skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. If an Ancestral Master were to have six or seven disciples within his assembly, he might employ some expression such as "You have realized what my Mind is" or "You have realized what my Body is." Or he might employ an expression like "You have realized what my Buddha Dharma is," or "You have realized what my Eye is," or "You have realized what my realization is." There are times when this so-called 'you' is the Ancestor and times when it is Eka. Thoroughly explore in detail the principle underlying the words 'you have realized'.

You need to realize that there will be a 'you having realized Me', and a 'me having realized You', and a 'realizing me being You', and a 'realizing you being Me'. In delving into the Body and Mind of the Ancestral Master, if you say that what lies within him and what lies outside him cannot be all of a oneness or that his whole Body cannot be his whole being, you are not in the land where Buddhas and Ancestors manifest. To have realized what the Skin is means to have realized what Bones, Flesh, and Marrow are. To have realized what Bones, Flesh, and Marrow are is to have realized what Skin, Flesh, and Countenance are. How could such a state as this be anything other than an understanding, as clear as a full dawning, of Master Chōsa Keishin's saying, "The whole universe in all directions is our Real, True Body?" Moreover, It is skin and flesh, bones and marrow. Consequently, It is 'realizing what my kesa is' and 'your having realized what the Dharma is'. Accordingly, even saying the words is a series of instances of 'springing out from delusion': Master and disciple harmonize and are equal. Even hearing the words is a series of instances of 'springing out from delusion': Master and disciple harmonize and are equal. The thorough harmonizing and equalizing of Master and disciple is the complicated, embracing kudzu and wisteria vines of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Shakyamuni's raising aloft the flower, His eyes atwinkle, is none other than the vines of kudzu and wisteria: Makakashō's breaking out into a smile is none other than Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow.

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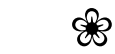
2. The phrase 'has realized my You' expresses the oneness of Master and disciple from the perspective of the Master, just as "you have realized what my Skin is" expresses it from the perspective of the disciple towards the Master. Both expressions refer to the transcendence of 'self and other'.

Moreover, you should thoroughly explore through your training that, just as the offspring of entangling vines have the capacity to drop off self, so also do branches and leaves, flowers and fruit appear, which all follow along with kudzu and wisteria vines. And because the offspring may be seen as dependent and, at the same time, independent of the vines, Buddhas and Ancestors manifest and our spiritual question appears before our very eyes.



> Great Master Jōshū Shinsai, in instructing his assembly, once said, "Makakashō gave the Transmission to Ananda. Right now, say to what person did Bodhidharma give the Transmission?"
>
> Thereupon, a monk asked him, "Well, what about the Second Ancestor, didn't he get the marrow?"
>
> The Master replied, "Do not engage in slandering the Second Ancestor."
>
> The Master said further, "Remember what Bodhidharma also said, that someone who is located on the outside realizes what the Skin is, whereas someone who is located on the inside realizes what the Bones are. Right now, say what someone who is located even further within realizes!"
>
> A monk asked, "What is this 'realizing what the marrow is' really about anyway?"
>
> The Master replied, "Just keep your focus on the Skin. For an old monk like me, the question of marrow doesn't even arise."
>
> The monk asked, "But what is the marrow?"
>
> The Master replied, "If that's the way things are for you, then you're still groping about for the Skin."

Accordingly, keep in mind that when you are still groping about for the Skin, you are still groping about for the Marrow, and in realizing what the Skin is through your groping, you also realize what the Marrow is. You should work diligently on the principle of "If that's the way things are for you, then you're still groping about for the Skin." In the monk's skeptically asking, "What is this 'realizing what the marrow is' <u>really</u> about anyway?" there emerged Jōshū's response of "Just keep your focus on the Skin. For an old monk like me, the question of marrow doesn't even arise." When someone focuses on the Skin, the marrow's not even coming up is what 'having realized what the Marrow is' really is. The doubting question of, "What about the Second Ancestor, didn't he realize what the marrow is?" arose because the monk was not focusing on the Skin. When we simply look at the

occasion when Makakashō gave the Transmission to Ananda, it involved Ananda 'concealing His Body' in Makakashō and Makakashō 'concealing His Body' in Ananda.[3] Even so, at the time when the two 'see' each other within the giving of Transmission, they do not escape from their everyday behavior, which alters their countenance and their skin, flesh, bones, and marrow. This is why Jōshū made the remark, "Right now, say It! Bodhidharma gave the Transmission to a person of What!"[4] At the time when Bodhidharma gave the Transmission, he was Bodhidharma, and when the Second Chinese Ancestor realized the Marrow, he was Bodhidharma. As we thoroughly explore this principle, we see that the Buddha Dharma, right up to this very day, is still the Buddha Dharma. If this were not so, the Buddha Dharma would not have come down to us today. Through exploring this principle carefully and diligently, we should learn how to express it ourselves and we should teach others how to express it.

Jōshū also said that Bodhidharma remarked, "Someone who is located on the outside realizes what the Skin is, whereas someone who is located on the inside realizes what the Bones are. Right now, say what someone who is located even further within realizes!" The essential meaning of the 'outside' and 'inside' spoken of here is extremely straightforward. When we discuss 'outside', then Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow have their outside: when we discuss 'inside', then Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow have their inside. Accordingly, his four disciple Bodhidharmas, all together, had thoroughly explored, instance by instance, hundreds of thousands of myriad spiritually awakened states of Skin, Flesh, Bones, and Marrow. Do not imagine that there cannot be states above and beyond that of Marrow, for there are three or maybe even five states above and beyond that.

The Old Buddha Jōshū was pointing out to his assembly just precisely what the Way of the Buddha is. This is beyond what others like Rinzai, Tokusan, Isan, and Ummon attained. It is something that they had never even dreamt of, much less expressed. It is something that present-day monastic 'old-timers' who are given to wild talk do not know even exists, and if we were to explain it to them, they would be startled and grow fearful.

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3. 'To conceal His Body in someone else' is a Zen Buddhist expression for someone's recognizing the Buddhahood of another.

4. Jōshū's remark contains a play on words often found in Zen kōan stories. The phrase *jūmo no hito*, rendered earlier in its conventional meaning as 'what person' (thus making Jōshū's remark a question), is understood in a Zen context as 'a person of What', that is, a person whose state is beyond the ability of words to convey. This latter meaning changes Jōshū's remark into an assertion for his disciple to respond to.

Meditation Master Setchō Jukēn once said, "The two Masters—Jōshū and Bokushū—are examples of what it means to be an Old Buddha." Accordingly, the words of Old Buddhas are Their awakened experience of Buddha Dharma and Their own personal ways of putting the Matter which They uttered in the past. Great Master Seppō Shinkaku once exclaimed, "Jōshū, the Old Buddha!" A previous Ancestor of the Buddha also praised Jōshū by eulogizing him as an Old Buddha, and a later Ancestor of the Buddha eulogized him as an Old Buddha as well. Obviously, they are saying that he is an Old Buddha who has gone beyond any spiritually awakened state attained by others of the past or present.

Consequently, the fundamental principle is that Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow embrace us like the vines of kudzu and wisteria. This is the standard of the statement "You have realized what I truly am," which Old Buddhas point out to Their assembly. Explore this criterion thoroughly and diligently.

Also, some say that the First Ancestor returned to the West, but through our training we learn that is inaccurate. Undoubtedly, what the monk Sōun saw could not have been literally real.[5] How could Sōun possibly have encountered the goings and comings of the Ancestral Master? Simply take as the correct study that after the parinirvana of the First Chinese Ancestor, his ashes were consigned to Bear's Ear Mountain.

Delivered to the assembly on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (July 25, 1243) at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple, Uji Prefecture, Yamashiro Province.

Copied by me on the third day of the third lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (April 11, 1244) in the office of the Abbot's chief assistant at Kippō-ji Temple, Yoshida Prefecture, Echizen Province.

Ejō

5. The monk Sōun, upon his return to China from an imperially supported visit to India for the purpose of collecting Buddhist writings, claimed to have met Bodhidharma upon the Silk Road. This event occurred three years after Bodhidharma's death. Crown Prince Shōtoku spoke of a similar encounter with Bodhidharma in Japan. These encounters may have occurred in some sense other than a literal one.

48

On 'The Threefold World Is Simply Your Mind'

(Sangai Yuishin)

Translator's Introduction: The title of this discourse comes from the first line of a verse passage in the *Avatamsaka Scripture*, which Dōgen takes as his theme. The threefold world is comprised of three spiritual states, the names of which are often rendered in English translations as those of desire, form, and beyond form. The world of desire is associated with the six worlds of existence: human, hellish, animal, hungry ghost, fighting spirits, plus the six lowest of the celestial realms. The world of form is associated with four higher celestial realms in which carnal appetites have dropped off. The world beyond form is associated with the four uppermost celestial realms wherein there is only the enjoyment of meditative states. The main theme of this discourse is that these three 'worlds', all together, comprise the whole of existence, with nothing beyond them, and that they are all constructs of our own mind.

Our Great Master Shakyamuni once said in verse:

> *The threefold world is simply our one, whole Mind,*
> *For there is nothing apart from the Mind.*
> *Our mind, Buddha, and all sentient beings—*
> *These three are indistinguishable from each other.*

What He expressed in this single verse is the whole effort of His lifetime, and this whole effort of His lifetime was the whole of all His efforts. While these efforts were actions that were done deliberately, they must have been actions that were the free functioning of His words and deeds. Therefore the statement, "The three worlds are simply our one, whole Mind," which the Tathagata voiced, is the full manifestation of the whole Tathagata, and the whole of His lifetime is the whole of this one verse. The three worlds constitute our whole world and, at the same time, we do not say that the three worlds are what our mind is. That is why the three worlds are still a threefold world however much they may resemble the brilliance of a crystal jewel which pervades all directions.[1]

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1. This particular reference to a jewel-like brilliance occurs in Zen texts to describe the penetrating brilliance and clarity of the original state of one's mind.

Although some may make the mistake of thinking that the mind is beyond the three worlds, this is totally impossible. The spaces of inside, outside, and in between, as well as the times of beginning, middle, and end—all are encompassed by the threefold world. The threefold world is just what is seen as the threefold world. And what is viewed as something beyond the threefold world is a misperception of the threefold world. The threefold world is viewed by some as 'an old nesting place' whereas others may see it as 'a new item'.[2] 'Old nests' and 'new items' are but different views of the same threefold world. This is why our Great Master Shakyamuni Buddha once said, "It is best to see the threefold world as the threefold world." What is looked at in this way is what the threefold world really is, and this threefold world is just as we perceive it to be. The threefold world is not one's fundamental being, nor is it our present existence, nor is it something that newly arises, nor is it something born from causes and conditions, and it is beyond anything that has a beginning, a middle, or an end. There is the threefold world that is left behind and there is the threefold world of the here and now. This is the mutual meeting of a marionette with a marionette.[3] It is the bringing forth and nurturing of kudzu and wisteria vines.[4] The threefold world of the here and now is what we see as the threefold world. 'What we see' means our seeing the threefold world as a threefold world. 'Seeing it as a threefold world' refers to the threefold world as it manifests right before us, as we manifest it right before us, and as our spiritual question manifests right before our very eyes. We all innately have the ability to make the threefold world be the vehicle for the arising of our spiritual intention, our practice and training, our realizing enlightenment, and our experiencing nirvana. This is why our Great Master Shakyamuni once said in verse:

These three worlds, right now,
Are what we all innately have,
And all sentient beings within them,
Without exception, are My children.

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2. 'An old nesting place' is a common Zen metaphor for a habitual, erroneous viewpoint, whereas 'a new item' refers to seeing things anew with enlightened eyes.

3. A marionette, or wooden figure, is sometimes used metaphorically in Zen texts to refer to someone who has awakened to his True Nature and is no longer 'pulling the strings'.

4. 'Kudzu and wisteria vines' here refers to the Master-disciple relationship. Dōgen explores this metaphor in Discourse 47: On the Vines That Entangle: the Vines That Embrace (*Kattō).*

Because these three worlds here and now are what the Tathagata innately had, the whole universe was His threefold world, because the threefold world is the whole universe. 'Here and now' encompasses the past, present, and future. The occurring of past, present, and future does not obstruct the here and now, but the occurring of the here and now does obstruct past, present, and future from arising.

That which 'we innately have' refers to the whole universe in all ten directions being our real, true Body. It refers to the whole universe in all ten directions being a mendicant monk's Eye. 'Sentient beings' are real, true bodies of the whole universe in all ten directions. Because each and every sentient being is born sentient, they are called 'sentient beings'.

'Without exception, they are My children' means that children are also manifestations of the ceaseless operation of Buddha Nature. Even so, of necessity, children receive their bodies, along with their hair and skin, all unharmed and unbroken, from a compassionate parent. Parents regard this as the child's fully manifesting. Yet, at this present moment, since there is no parent who is before and no child who is after, nor a child who is before and a parent who is after, nor a parent and child being lined up beside each other, we call this the principle of 'My children'. Although the body is not something that is given, we receive it; although it is not something that we snatch, we acquire it. It is beyond the characteristics of coming and going, beyond the measure of large and small, beyond discussions of old and young. We should hold to it like the 'old' and 'young' of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Sometimes there is a parent who is 'young' and a child who is 'old', or a parent who is 'old' and a child who is 'young', or a parent who is 'old' and a child who is 'old', or a parent who is 'young' and a child who is 'young'. One who makes a study of his parent's 'agedness' would not be a child; one who has not seen through the 'youthfulness' of his child would not be a parent. The 'age' and 'youth' of a child, as well as the 'age' and 'youth' of a parent, must be fully explored, in detail, and without haste.

There are parents and children for whom the parent-child relationship emerges at the same time, and there are those for whom the parent-child relationship disappears at the same time, and there are those for whom the parent-child relationship emerges at different times, and there are those for whom the parent-child relationship disappears at different times. Without standing against the compassionate parent, one has brought forth 'my child', and without standing against 'my child', one has brought forth the compassionate parent. There are sentient beings who are mindful, and there are sentient beings who are not mindful; there is my child who is mindful, and there is my child who is not mindful. In this manner, my child and I —and I am also a child—are both the true heirs of our

Compassionate Parent Shakyamuni. All beings of the past, present, and future in the whole universe—every last one of them—are the Buddhas of past, present, and future in the whole universe. The children of all Buddhas are sentient beings, and the Compassionate Parents of all sentient beings are Buddhas. Consequently, the flowering and fruiting of the hundreds of things that arise are what all Buddhas have as Their own, and the rocks and stones, large and small, are what all Buddhas have as Their own as well. Their peaceful places are the forests and fields, for They are already free of attachment to forests and fields. Be that as it may, the main point of what the Tathagata said was simply the phrase 'My children'. You need to thoroughly explore that He never spoke of His being their parent.

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Shakyamuni Buddha once said:

> Even the three Bodies of all Buddhas do not extend beyond the threefold world.[5] Since no sentient being exists outside the threefold world, why would there be some other place where the Buddha would transform Himself for their sake? Therefore, I say that the assertion that there is another world of sentient beings outside of the threefold world is a teaching from the non-Buddhist *Scripture on the Greater Existence,* and it is not what has been voiced by the Seven Buddhas.*

You should clarify through your thorough exploration with your Master that the three Bodies of all Buddhas are these three worlds. Nothing exists outside of these three worlds. For example, just as nothing exists outside the Tathagata, so too nothing exists outside of our walls and fences. And just as nothing exists outside of training, so too nothing exists outside of being a sentient being. Were there no sentient beings, who is it that could be converted by a Buddha? What is being converted by a Buddha is always a sentient being. Keep in mind that the saying, "Outside the threefold world, there is another world of sentient beings," is a product of the non-Buddhist *Scripture on the Greater Existence*.

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5 These three Bodies of the Buddha (Skt. *Trikaya*) are: 1) The Truth Body (Skt. *Dharmakaya*), which represents Absolute Truth or Buddha Mind Itself. 2) The Reward Body (Skt. *Sambhogakaya*), which represents the blissful reward of Buddhist training. 3) The Transformation Body (Skt. *Nirmanakaya*), which is the physical body of the Buddha as It appears in the world.

* See *Glossary*.

The one, whole Mind is beyond being just one or two things. It is beyond the threefold world and beyond departing from the threefold world. It is beyond 'making mistakes'. It has the knowledge obtained from one's discriminating and It is not bound by that knowledge. It is the tiles* and stones of our walls and fences and It is the great earth with its mountains and rivers. Mind is synonymous with Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow; Mind is synonymous with holding the flower aloft and breaking into a smile.[6] There is the mind of attachment and the mind free from attachments. There is the embodied mind and there is the Mind beyond body. There is the mind that comes before the body, and there is the mind that comes after the body. When a body is born, it will be from a womb, from an egg, from moisture, or from some transformation. When a mind emerges, it will be from a womb, from an egg, from moisture, or from some transformation. Blue, yellow, red, and white are what the Mind is. Long and short, square and round are what the Mind is. Birth and death, coming and going, are what the Mind is. Years, months, days, and hours are what the Mind is. Dreams, visions, and flowers in the sky are what the Mind is. Water bubbles, foam, and flame are what the Mind is. The spring flowers and the autumn moon are what the Mind is. Our day-to-day moments are what the Mind is. Even so, It cannot be destroyed. For this reason, the Mind is the real appearance of all thoughts and things. The Mind is each Buddha on His own, along with all other Buddhas.

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> Great Master Gensha Shibi once asked his disciple Jizō Keichin, "Just how do you understand the saying 'The threefold world is simply your mind?'"
>
> Pointing to a chair, Keichin said, "When naming that thing, Venerable Monk, what do you take it to be?"
>
> The Great Master said, "A chair."
>
> Keichin then said, "Venerable Monk, you do not understand 'The threefold world is simply your mind.'"[7]

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6 This is a reference to the Transmission of the Dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha, who held aloft an udumbara blossom, to his smiling disciple Makakashō.

7. Despite this remark's implication that the Master is lacking in some way, it actually has a positive meaning, namely, that the Master's understanding goes beyond a merely intellectual one.

> The Great Master replied, "When giving a name to that thing, I see it as bamboo and wood. When you name it, what do you take it to be?"
>
> Keichin responded, "When I name it, I also take it to be bamboo and wood."
>
> The Great Master then said, "Were we to search the whole of the great earth for somebody who understood Buddha Dharma, we would not be able to find a single one."[8]

Now, let us look at the Great Master's question, "Just how do <u>you</u> understand the saying 'The threefold world is simply your mind?'" Whether one has a way of understanding this saying or not, both states are synonymous with the threefold world being simply one's own mind. This is why the threefold world may not yet be 'simply one's mind'.[9] And this is why Keichin pointed to a chair and said, "When naming that thing, Venerable Monk, what do you take it to be?" You need to understand that "What do you take it to be?" means "How do you go about naming it?"

As to the 'chair' that the Great Master spoke of, we should also add, "Did he understand the term 'the threefold world' or not?" and "Is the chair synonymous with the term 'the threefold world' or does it go beyond it?" and "Was the term 'the threefold world' referring to the word 'chair' or to what the Great Master said?" You need to thoroughly investigate expressions like this so that you may learn to express the Matter yourself. By asking questions like this, you come to your own understanding of the Matter. And by investigating the experience of others, you can come to have your own experience of the Truth.

> Keichin then said, "Venerable Monk, you do not understand 'The threefold world is simply your mind.'"

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8. One of the ways by which a Chinese Zen Master would test the spiritual level of a disciple was by asking him or her, "How do <u>you</u> understand such-and-such a saying?" It is evident from the context that the discussion centers on the principle of the difference and non-difference between component parts, such as bamboo and wood pieces (one's 'tiles and stones'), and the ordering of those pieces to form a functionally useful object, such as a chair (one's 'walls and fences'). Dōgen, apparently deliberately, does not say how this particular kōan story is to be understood, but s leaves the reader to decide how he or she would respond to Shibi's question.

9. That is, because one may not yet understand that the threefold world <u>is</u> simply one's mind, such a person will not recognize that this is so.

This statement is, for example, equivalent to 'the East Gate and the South Gate' whereby Jōshū expressed what a Jōshū is—and he was also the West Gate and the North Gate. And furthermore there is an East Jōshū district and a South Jōshū district in China.[10] Even if you have an understanding of what 'the threefold world is simply your mind' means, you need to thoroughly explore what Keichin meant by his statement, "You do not understand 'The threefold world is simply your mind.'" Moreover, the statement that "The 'threefold world is simply your mind'" goes beyond 'understanding' and 'not understanding'.

> The Great Master replied, "When giving a name to that thing, I see it as bamboo and wood."

We certainly need to shed light upon the details of this most excellent expression, which goes beyond any discriminative concept. As to the Great Master's statement, "When giving a name to that thing, I see it as be bamboo and wood," what did he call it prior to his naming it as bamboo and wood in the present instance? In its jewel-like brilliance up to that moment, had it always been—beginning, middle, and end—bamboo and wood? In his calling it bamboo and wood at this time, is he saying that this is synonymous with the threefold world simply being one's mind? Or is he not saying that this is synonymous with the threefold world simply being one's mind? Keep in mind that, in his saying of a morning that the threefold world is simply one's mind, he may express it as 'a chair', or as 'simply the mind', or as 'the threefold world'. Even so, in his saying of an evening that the threefold world is simply one's mind, he may express it as, "When giving a name to that thing, I see it as bamboo and wood."

You need to recognize that Keichin's saying "When I name it, I also take it to be bamboo and wood" may be part of a face-to-face interchange between Master and disciple, and then again it may be that they are both right from start to finish in exploring the Matter together. Be that as it may, you need to thoroughly explore through <u>your</u> training whether the Great Master's saying, "When giving a name to that thing, I see it as bamboo and wood," and Keichin's saying, "When I name it, I also take it to be bamboo and wood," are actually both saying the same thing and whether or not they are both correct.

> The Great Master then said, "Were we to search the whole of the great earth for somebody who understood Buddha Dharma, we would not be able to find a single one."

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10. In other words, the name that we give to something is relative, not absolute. Thus, the East Jōshū district is east in relationship to the South Jōshū district, and vice versa.

This expression also needs the closest scrutiny. Keep in mind that the Great Master, in naming it, simply took it to be bamboo and wood, as Keichin did also. Further, they had not understood "The threefold world is simply one's mind," nor had they failed to understand "The threefold world is simply one's mind," nor had they asserted that the threefold world is simply one's mind, nor had they failed to assert that the threefold world is simply one's mind. Even so, I should like to ask Great Master Shibi, "You assert that, were we to search the whole of the great earth for somebody who understood Buddha Dharma, we would not be able to find a single person, but see if you can answer me this: what do you take 'the whole earth' to be?" In sum, we need to thoroughly explore the Matter* in this way.

Given to the assembly on the first day of the seventh intercalary lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (August 17, 1243) on Yamashi Peak in Echizen Province.[11]

Copied by me on the twenty-fifth day of the same month and year (September 10, 1243) whilst in the quarters of the acting Head Monk.

Ejō

11. In the Chinese and Japanese lunar calendar, there are twelve months of either twenty-eight or thirty days. Since this creates a discrepancy with the 365-day solar calendar, every two or three years a thirteenth lunar month is inserted (intercalated) in the calendar at some point. In the present instance, it was inserted between the seventh and eighth lunar months. This is technically known as an intercalary lunar month. An analogy can be found with our inserting the day of February 29 every four years to even out the annual solar calendar, and that day is technically called an intercalary day.

49

On the Real Form of All Thoughts and Things

(Shohō Jissō)

Translator's Introduction: The title of this discourse implies that how we perceive things to be may not actually be their real form. In such contexts the term 'form' means 'the way things appear to us, how they look, and the form they take'. Also, the phrase 'each and every Buddha' is saying that everyone who has realized Buddhahood is unique in regards to the way in which They have fully and directly realized the Truth, and, at the same time, They are exactly like all other Buddhas as to what It is that They have realized. Because what is real is That Which is Real, wherever the term 'real form' occurs, it implies that all thoughts and things are inseparable from their True Nature. Hence, where Dōgen refers to 'real form', he is also referring to 'Real Form'.

All Buddhas and Ancestors fully manifest Their thorough realization of what is real. What is real are all Their thoughts and the things around Them.[1] All Their thoughts and the things around Them comprise Their form just as it is, Their True Nature just as it is, Their body just as it is, Their mind just as it is, Their world just as it is, Their 'clouds and rain' just as they are,[2] Their daily activities—walking, standing, sitting, and reclining—just as they are, Their moving or being still within Their joys and sorrows just as they are, Their traveling staff* and Their ceremonial hossu* just as they are, Their flower raised aloft and Their face breaking into a smile just as they are,[3] Their inheriting the Dharma and Their prophesying Buddhahood just as they are, Their training under a Master and Their doing the practice just as they are, and Their pine-like fidelity and Their bamboo-like integrity just as they are.

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1. 'All Their thoughts and things' are what They experience directly, whether it be what appears to arise from within as 'thoughts' or what appears to arise externally as 'things'.

2. 'Clouds and rain' is a common Chinese metaphor for sexual thoughts and feelings that arise.

* See *Glossary.*

3 This is a reference to the Transmission of the Dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha, who held aloft an udumbara blossom, to his smiling disciple Makakashō.

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Shakyamuni Buddha once said:

> Only a Buddha is directly able to fully realize the real form of all thoughts and things, just as all Buddhas have done. What is called 'all thoughts and things' is form just as it is, True Nature just as It is, physical body just as it is, spiritual abilities just as they are, as well as actions just as they are, causes just as they are, conditions just as they are, effects just as they are, and consequences just as they are, for all things are Ultimate Reality, from beginning to end, just as they are.

The Tathagata's phrase 'Ultimate Reality from beginning to end' was His own way of expressing the reality of all thoughts and things. It is the way our Master Shakyamuni personally expressed it. It was His exploring through His training that all things are equal, because when we explore the Matter* through our training, all things are seen to be equal.

Each and every Buddha is the real form of the True Dharma, and the real form of the True Dharma is each and every Buddha. Each Buddha is 'the real form', and every Buddha comprises 'all thoughts and things'. Hearing the phrase 'all thoughts and things', we should not explore it as being the One, nor should we explore it as being the many. Upon hearing the phrase 'the Real Form', we should not understand it as something beyond emptiness, nor should we understand it as something beyond one's True Nature. 'Real' refers to each Buddha and 'form' refers to every Buddha. Being 'directly able' refers to each Buddha and 'fully realizing' refers to every Buddha. 'All thoughts and things' refers to what each Buddha is, whereas 'the Real Form' refers to what every Buddha is. 'All thoughts and things are undoubtedly all thoughts and things' is realized by each Buddha, and 'all thoughts and things are reality' is realized by every Buddha.

Hence, there are forms just as they are and there is the True Nature just as It is, wherein all thoughts and things exist as thoughts and things of their own accord. And forms are, precisely, forms: there are their forms just as they are and there is their True Nature just as It is. When Shakyamuni manifested in the world as Buddha, He expounded, practiced, and realized the Real Form of all thoughts and things just as all Buddhas have done. What He expounded is synonymous with His being directly able to realize the Truth to Its fullest. Though we say that what He experienced was a full realization, He had to be able to directly realize It. Because such a realization was beyond having a beginning, middle, or end, it was His form just as it was and His True Nature just as It was.

His being directly able to fully realize It is synonymous with the Real Form of all His thoughts and things. The Real Form of all His thoughts and things is synonymous with their forms just as they were. Their forms just as they were is synonymous with His being directly able to realize His True Nature just as It was. His True Nature just as It was is synonymous with His being directly able to realize His True Body just as It was. His True Body just as It was is synonymous with His being directly able to realize His spiritual abilities just as they were. His spiritual abilities just as they were is synonymous with His being directly able to realize His actions just as they were. His actions just as they were is synonymous with His being directly able to recognize their causes just as they were. Their causes just as they were is synonymous with His being directly able to recognize their conditions just as they were. Their conditions just as they were is synonymous with His being directly able to recognize their effects just as they were. Their effects just as they were is synonymous with His being directly able to recognize their consequences just as they were. Their consequences just as they were is synonymous with His being directly able to recognize that all things are equally manifestations of Ultimate Reality, from beginning to end, just as they are.

His assertion that all things are equally manifestations of Ultimate Reality, from beginning to end, is their being just as they are as they manifest before us. Hence, if the effect called ‘nirvana’ is not the result of some cause, then it follows that the effect called ‘cause and effect’ must be the result of nirvana. To the extent that these effects—namely, those of form, innate nature, physical body, and spiritual abilities—mutually limit each other, the forms, innate natures, physical bodies, and abilities of all thoughts and things—however immeasurable and unbounded they may be—are their real forms. And to the extent that these effects—namely, those of form, innate nature, physical body, and spiritual ability—do not limit each other, they are their Real Form together with their being such things as form, innate nature, physical body, and spiritual ability. When we entrust the task of defining form, innate nature, physical body, and spiritual ability to such things as effects, consequences, causes, and conditions, there will be an expression that is eighty or ninety percent of a full realization. When we do not entrust the task of defining form, innate nature, physical body, and spiritual ability to such things as effects, consequences, causes, and conditions, there will be an expression that is a one hundred percent full realization.

What has been called ‘form just as it is’ is not one single form nor is it one uniform thing just as it is: it is That which is beyond measure and bounds, which is inexpressible and unfathomable, and which is just as It is. You should not consider a measurement in hundreds or thousands to be Its measure, but you should measure It by using the yardstick of ‘all thoughts and things’, by using the yardstick of ‘Its

Real Form'. Thus, each and every Buddha is able to fully realize the Real Form and the Real Nature of all thoughts and things. And each and every Buddha is directly able to fully realize the Real Physical Body and the real potential of all thoughts and things. And each and every Buddha is directly able to fully realize the real activities and the real causes of all thoughts and things. And each and every Buddha is directly able to fully realize the real conditions and the real effects of all thoughts and things. And each and every Buddha is directly able to fully realize the consequences of all thoughts and things. Each and every Buddha is directly able to fully realize that all thoughts and things are equally manifestations of Truth—that is, of Ultimate Reality—from beginning to end, just as all Buddha's have done.

For reasons like these, the Buddha lands in all ten directions are simply each and every Buddha. Further, there is not a single one, not even half a one, that is not 'each and every Buddha'. 'Each and every' refers to, for example, a Physical Body being provided with a physical body, or a form bearing witness to Form. And it is also like the innate nature of a physical body retaining its innate Nature. This is why the Buddha said, "Only I and all the Buddhas in the ten directions can directly know these things."

Thus, the very moment of being able to fully realize these things and the very moment of being able to know them are, both alike, instances of 'for the time being' . If we ourselves were different from the Buddhas in the ten directions, how could we possibly realize what the Buddhas in all the ten quarters have taught? Because right here in this place there are no 'ten directions', the ten directions are this very place right here.[4] As a result, when Real Form encounters all thoughts and things, the Spring dwells within Its flowers, human beings encounter the Spring, the Moon illumines the moon, people come face-to-face with their True Self and see It reflected in Water, and all of these alike are the principle of a mutual encountering.[5]

This is why we learn through our training with a Master what Real Form is by means of <u>his</u> real form, and why the Buddhas and Ancestors have inherited from Buddhas and Ancestors the kesa,* which is the mantle of Truth. This is why Buddhahood is predicted for every single thing by means of every single thing. The Dharma was Transmitted for the sake of each and every Buddha, and the Dharma was inherited for the sake of each and every Buddha. This is why birth-and-death and coming-and-going exist. It is why the intention to train, training and practice,

4. That is, the ten directions are everywhere at every instant and not in just one place at one time.

5. That is, of self encountering Self.

the attaining of Wisdom, and nirvana exist. By making use of the intention to train, training and practice, the attaining of Wisdom, and nirvana, we thoroughly explore that the human body really is birth-and-death and coming-and-going, and, in protecting what we have received, we now hold firm and we now let go. With this as our bloodline, the flower opens and bears its fruit; with this as their bones and marrow, Makakashō and Ananda existed.[6] The forms, just as they are, of wind, rain, water, and fire are what Makakashō and Ananda fully realized, and the innate natures, just as they are, of blue, yellow, red, and white, are what they fully realized as well. By relying upon our physical body and spiritual abilities, we turn the mundane into the sacred, and by relying upon their effects and consequences, we surpass Buddha and transcend Ancestor. By relying on these causes and conditions, we take hold of dirt and transmute it into gold. By relying upon effects and consequences, we receive the Transmission of the Dharma along with the robe.

The Tathagata then said that this gives expression to the real seal* of the Ancestors. Let me express this another way. This was His putting into action, hearkening to, and bearing witness to the seal of Real Form. We need to truly investigate the Matter in this manner. What this is basically pointing to is, for instance, like a pearl whirling around in a bowl or a bowl whirling around a pearl.

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The Buddha Who Is Radiantly Bright as Sun and Moon once said in verse:

The meaning of 'all thoughts and things are the Real Form'
Has already been voiced both for your sake and for the sake of others.[7]

In exploring this saying through your training with your Master, you should thoroughly investigate that the Buddhas and Ancestors have invariably taken the meaning of 'all thoughts and things are the Real Form' to be synonymous with the one great Matter. The Buddhas and Ancestors have proclaimed what the 'Real Form' of the eighteen realms of the senses actually is.[8] Throughout the time before

6. Ananda was Makakashō's Dharma heir, making him the Second Indian Ancestor.

7. A quote from the *Lotus Scripture*. All references to 'this discourse' that follow in this text refer to the *Lotus Scripture*.

8. The eighteen realms of the senses are the six sense organs of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind, along with the six sense objects of form, sound, smell, taste, sensation, and

the existence of Their body and mind, the time after the existence of Their body and mind, and the time during the existence of Their body and mind, They gave expression to such things as the Real Form, Its Nature, Its physical embodiment, and Its spiritual abilities. Those who have not fully realized what Real Form is, those who have not given expression to It, those who do not understand It, and those who have not gone beyond their present understanding of real form are not Ancestors of the Buddha, but rather demons or beasts.

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Shakyamuni Buddha once said, "The fully perfected enlightenment of all bodhisattvas* is encompassed within this discourse of Mine. This discourse of Mine opens up the Gate of Skillful Means and points to the genuine Real Form of all things."

'All bodhisattvas' means all Buddhas. Buddhas and bodhisattvas are not different species, nor are they different in maturity or in excellence. This bodhisattva and that bodhisattva are not two separate persons, nor are they self and other, nor are they some person of past, present, or future. Rather, training to become Buddha is their means in the Dharma of putting the Bodhisattva Way into practice. They became a Buddha with the first arising of their intention to realize Buddhahood, and they will become a Buddha in the final stage of Bodhisattvahood. And there are bodhisattvas who have become Buddhas countless hundreds and thousands and millions of times. There are those who say that after bodhisattvas become Buddhas, they discontinue practice because there is nothing left for them to do. Such people are mundane persons who have no direct knowledge of the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

Those called 'all bodhisattvas' are the original Ancestors of all Buddhas, and all Buddhas are the original Teachers of all bodhisattvas. Whether all these Buddhas did Their practice in the past and awoke to the Truth, do it in the present, or will do it in the future, whether They do the practice first with Their body in order to awaken to the Truth, or ultimately do the practice with Their mind, all these will be in accord with this discourse of the Buddha—beginning, middle, and end. Whatever else can be encompassed or included will also be in accord with this discourse, and, at this very moment, this discourse of His awakens us to all manner of enlightenment.

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thought, and the six sense consciousnesses (that is, the awareness of each organ that allows perception to occur.)

A Buddha's discourse is beyond the sentient and the non-sentient; it is beyond the relative and the absolute. Even so, when He became aware of bodhisattvas, of ordinary humans, of the Real Form of things, and of this discourse, He opened the Gate of Skillful Means. The Gate of Skillful Means is the unsurpassed meritorious functioning of the fruits of Buddhahood. It is the Dharma that resides in the place of Dharma and It is the form of the world as it constantly manifests. The Gate of Skillful Means does not refer to some momentary skill. Trainees take up the Real Form of all thoughts and things, and explore It thoroughly through their training with a Master. Although this Gate of Skillful Means manifests Itself in such a way as to cover the whole universe with the whole of the universe, those who are not among 'all bodhisattvas' are not within Its realm.

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Seppō once said, "The whole of the great earth is the gateway to liberation, but people are afraid to enter the gate even if they are dragged through it." So, keep in mind that even though the whole earth and all the worlds are gateways to liberation, it will not be easy to go in and out of any of them, and those who have tried to pass through one are not many. When people are dragged, they neither get in nor get out. If they are not dragged, they neither get in nor get out. The one who advances his step will stumble, and the one who retreats will be delayed. So, what further is to be said? If we try to force a person either to go in or out of the gate, the gate will become more and more distant. If we take the gate and get it to enter a person, there will be a chance of their going in or out of it.

'To open the Gate of Skillful Means' means to point to the genuine Real Form of things. Even though we chop time up into moments of beginning, middle, and end, pointing to the genuine Real Form of things covers the whole of time. The underlying principle of momentarily opening the Gate of Skillful Means involves opening It by opening the whole universe. At the very moment when you catch sight of the opening of the whole universe, it will be something that you have never encountered before. By our grasping once or twice at an intellectual concept of what opening of whole universe is and then grasping at it for a third or fourth time as something real, we cause the Gate of Skillful Means to open. Accordingly, it may seem that the whole universe is identical with opening the Gate of Skillful Means, but it appears to me that an immeasurable number of whole universes have each taken a small piece from the opening of the Gate of Skillful Means and have made that small piece into the form that each universe displays. But their grandeur is due entirely to their being encompassed within the present discourse.

'To point out the authentic Real Form' means to keep hearing the phrase 'the Real Form of all thoughts and things' throughout all worlds and to realize enlightenment throughout all worlds. It is to help all humanity understand the underlying principle that Real Form is what all thoughts and things are and to help manifest the whole of the Dharma.

Accordingly, the unsurpassed, enlightened Wisdom of the forty Buddhas and forty Ancestors is completely included within this present discourse;[9] It is encompassed within this discourse, and this discourse is encompassed within It. The meditation cushion and the meditation board are Supreme Wisdom and, as such, they are encompassed within this discourse.[10] Shakyamuni's holding the udumbara blossom aloft and Makakashō's breaking into a smile, as well as respectful bowing which secures the very marrow of the Way, are all encompassed within this discourse.[11] To open the Gate of Skillful Means is to point to the authentic Real Form.

Even so, an untrustworthy bunch in present-day Great Sung China, not knowing what to think, do not see where the Treasure is housed and act as if the phrase 'Real Form' were devoid of meaning. So they study the sayings of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu, asserting that their teachings are equal to the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors. They also say that the Three Teachings—Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism—are in agreement with each other. Or they say that the Three Teachings are like the three legs of a tripod that would overturn if even one leg were absent. I am completely unable to come up with any simile for their excessive foolishness.

We cannot acknowledge that people who talk like this have ever heard the Dharma of the Buddha. And why? Because the Dharma of the Buddha had its origin in India where, during the eighty years of His life, the Buddha spent fifty years of His prime giving voice to the Dharma in order to transform both ordinary people and those in lofty positions. By transforming sentient beings, He helped them to enter the Buddha's Way. After that, twenty-eight Indian Ancestors experienced the genuine Transmission, which is considered to be the ultimate, the

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9. The forty Buddhas is an allusion to the Buddhas from the Seven Buddhas down to the Thirty-third Chinese Ancestor Daikan Enō. The forty Ancestors refers to the Ancestors from Daikan Enō up through the Seven Buddhas.

10. The meditation board is a plank that was used, particularly by the aged or the infirm, to rest one's chin upon or to lean against while doing long sessions of seated meditation.

11. Dōgen explored this reference to respectful bowing in great detail in Discourse 10: On 'Respectful Bowing Will Secure for You the Very Marrow of the Way' *(Raihai Tokuzui)*.

subtlest, the finest, and the most esteemed. All those who were outside the Way or who were demons in lofty positions were ultimately defeated. We do not know the number of ordinary people and those in lofty positions who realized Buddhahood and became Ancestors. Even so, none of them ever said that the Buddha's Dharma was insufficient for them, so they never paid a call on Confucianism or Taoism in China. If one were to agree that the Three Teachings were in accord, then at the time when the Buddha's Dharma emerged, such teachings as Confucianism and Taoism should have emerged concurrently in India. But the Teaching of the Buddha's Dharma is encapsulated in the saying, "In the heavens above and the earth below, I alone am the sole Honored One."[12] We should think back to the events of that time and we should not make a mistake by forgetting them. Talking about the Three Teachings being in accord does not equal even the babbling sounds of a little baby. It is a statement made by that bunch who are out to destroy the Buddha's Dharma. Folks like that are all too many. It is provoking to see that people like these have become guiding teachers for ordinary humans and those in lofty places, while others have even become teachers and masters to emperors and kings. Alas, the Buddha Dharma is degenerating in present-day Great Sung China! My former Master, who was an Old Buddha, strongly cautioned me about this.

People like these are seeds that produce the two Lesser Courses* and the non-Buddhists. They have already wasted two or three centuries without even knowing that Real Form exists. They speak only of exploring the True Teaching so that they might escape from the continual cycle of birth-and-death. Many are those who do not even know what it means to explore the True Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors, for they fancy that just living in a monastery is what practice is. How pitiful that the words and ways of the Ancestral Masters are now dying out! It is what the venerable monks of long-standing who hold to the true words and ways of the Buddha greatly lament. Do not give ear to the words and phrases that emerge from the likes of that bunch spoken of earlier. Rather, we should pity them.

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Meditation Master Engo once said, "Birth-and-death and coming-and-going are a person's true Real Body." By exploring this expression, we will come to know ourselves and we will give our consideration to the Buddha Dharma.

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12. This quotation is attributed to the Buddha. Immediately following His Birth, He is purported to have taken seven steps and then pointed up towards the heavens with His right hand and down towards the earth with His left, whilst uttering the words quoted above.

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Chōsa once said, "The whole universe in all ten directions is a person's true Real Body. The whole universe in all ten directions lies within the radiant brightness of one's own True Self." But, in general, even veteran trainees in present-day Sung China still do not know that they need to explore a saying like this through their training.[13] Much less do they know how to put it into practice! Were we to quote this saying to them, they would simply go red in the face and be left speechless.

❀

My former Master, the Old Buddha, once said:

> Veteran trainees all over Sung China have still not illumined either the past or the present. They have not yet grasped the underlying principle of the Buddha Dharma. Although the whole universe in all ten directions, among other things, is constantly presenting itself in this manner, how could they possibly know it? Outside of Great Sung China, it is as if they had never even heard of it.

After hearing this, I questioned veteran trainees throughout Sung China about this underlying principle, and to tell the truth, few had even heard of it. How sad that they dishonor the offices they occupy with such pointless talk!

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Meditation Master Ōan Donge once addressed Tokki Daitoku, saying:

> If you wish to understand the Matter easily, then throughout the whole twenty-four hours of each day, just keep your focus on the arising of mind and the moving of thoughts. As you approach the moving thoughts, you may suddenly experience the Ungraspable, That Which Is the Here and Now. It will be like vast, unbounded space, and there will be no forms or delimitations within that space. Outside and inside will be one and the same; self and other will both become extinct, and the unfathomable and the clear will both disappear. The three periods of time—past, present, and future—will be equal. Those

13. 'Veteran trainees' is a common term for monks who have been in monastic life for a long time but have made little or no progress spiritually.

> who arrive at this state are called 'people at ease in the Way who are unattached to anything and have nothing more to accomplish.'

These are the words spoken by the elder Ōan who used his full strength to express the essence of the Dharma. But this is simply his chasing after shadows, as if he did not know how to stop pursuing words. Can the Buddha Dharma not exist when inside and outside are not one and the same? What is this 'inside and outside'? Also, the assertion of the Buddhas and Ancestors is that there <u>are</u> forms and delimitations within space. And what does he mean by 'space'? When we think about it, Ōan did not yet know what space is, nor had he seen what space is, nor had he taken hold of space, nor had he struck space.

Ōan speaks of mind arising and thoughts moving, and yet there is the fundamental principle that the Mind never moves, so how could there possibly be an arising of mind within the twenty-four hours of a day? No mind can come and enter into the twenty-four hours of a day, nor can the twenty-four hours of the day come into the twenty-four hours of the Mind. Much less can there be an arising of Mind! And what, pray, is the moving of one's thoughts? Do thoughts move or do they not move? Or are they beyond moving and not moving? What is this 'moving' of his? Moreover, what is 'not moving'? What is he calling 'thoughts'? Do thoughts occur within the twenty-four hours of a day? Or do the twenty-four hours of a day occur within one's thoughts? Or can there be a time beyond these two?

He says that if you wish to understand the Matter easily, then throughout the whole twenty-four hours of each day, just keep your focus on the arising of mind and the moving of thoughts. But what is this Matter that can be understood easily? Is 'easily understood' something he is saying about the Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors? If so, then he needs to know that the Buddha's Teaching is beyond easy to understand or difficult to understand, which is why Nangaku and Baso followed their respective Masters for ever so long in their practice of the Way.[14]

Ōan speaks of suddenly experiencing the Ungraspable, That Which Is the Here and Now. But he has never encountered the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors even in his dreams. How can one of such limited ability as his possibly be up to 'wishing to understand easily'? Understand clearly that he had not yet thoroughly explored the Great Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors. If the Buddha's Dharma was like what he said, how could It possibly have come down to us today?

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14. Nangaku's Master was Enō and Baso's Master was Nangaku.

Now, this is the case with Ōan himself. Yet, were we to seek for ever so long among the veteran monks in mountain monasteries of the present day for someone who was like Ōan, we would not encounter him. And were we to search until our eyes grew dim, we would not encounter a veteran monk who was the equal of Ōan. There are many in recent times who acknowledge Ōan, but even so, it would be difficult for me to acknowledge that he had realized the Buddha Dharma. I would simply say that he deserves a seat among the juniors in a monastery and that he is of average experience. And why? Because Ōan did at least have enough spirit to spot 'such a person'.* Folks today cannot recognize 'such a person' because they do not even know themselves. Although I say that Ōan had not yet fully arrived, he did have experience of the Way, experience that such folks as the veteran monks of today do not have. Though I would say that Ōan had heard good words, they had not penetrated his ears, much less had he 'seen them' with his ears. They had not penetrated his eyes, much less had he 'heard them' with his eyes. Though this is the way that Ōan was, today he would naturally have awakened to something. Veteran monks in the mountain monasteries of Great Sung China today have not even caught a glimpse of what Ōan's 'inside and outside' means; nothing that comes out of their mouths or that shows on their faces are in the same realm as him. Folks like this cannot tell whether the Real Form that the Buddhas and Ancestors have expressed is embodied within the words and ways of the Buddhas and Ancestors. This is why, for the past two or three centuries, none of the folks who speak wildly, like these old veteran monks, have been able to speak of or to see Real Form.

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In giving informal instruction in the Abbot's private quarters, my late Master, the Old Buddha of Tendō, said in verse one night:

Tonight, Tendō Mountain is blessed with calves,
And a golden-faced Gautama holds aloft the Real Form.
"If buying is your wish, how will you afford Its priceless price?"
So cries the night bird from above the solitary cloud on high.

When the situation is as described above, venerable senior monks who are accomplished in the Buddha's Way speak of Real Form. Those who do not know the Buddha Dharma and who do not explore the Buddha's Way do not speak of Real Form.

The preceding poem came about in the following manner. It was nearing the fourth watch of a night in the third lunar month in the spring of the second year of the great Sung era of Hōkyō (1226), when three beats from the summoning drum sounded from above.[15] Putting on my kesa and taking my bowing mat, I left the Cloud Hall through the front entrance. The sign to go enter the Master's room for a spiritual interview had been hung up. First off, I followed the crowd of monks up to the Dharma Hall. Going past the west wall of the Dharma Hall, I climbed the west stairway to the Ancestral Shrine. Passing by the west wall of the Ancestral Shrine, I climbed the west stairway of the Hall of Great Brightness. The Hall of Great Brightness is where the Abbot's quarters are. Going by the southern end of a screen along the west side, I reached the incense stand and, after offering incense, I did my prostrations. I had expected that lines would have formed here for entry into the Master's room, but I did not see even one monk. The Abbot's main room had been screened off from me by bamboo blinds. I could hear, but barely, the sound of the Teaching being given by this Great Monk who was the Head of our temple.

At that moment, the monk who was Precentor, Sokon by name, from Szechwan Province, arrived. After he too had offered incense and made his prostrations, we quietly approached the main room, which was packed with monks who were seated regardless of east or west.[16] The Abbot's informal talk was in progress, so we quietly entered behind the assembly and listened to it while continuing to stand.

He was giving an account of Meditation Master Daibai Hōjō's living in the mountains. At the part where he described Hōjō's wearing clothes made from lotus leaves and harvesting pine trees for food, many in the community began to weep.[17] During his detailed recounting of the story of Shakyamuni Buddha's retreat on Vulture Peak, again, many who heard it were moved to tears.

The Master ended his Dharma talk by saying, "The retreat on Mount Tendō draws near. Since it is springlike now, it is neither cold nor hot. It will be a fine time to do seated meditation, so why would any junior or senior not wish to sit in meditation?" He then recited his poem quoted above.

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15. The Abbot's quarters were in the highest building on the mountain.

16. That is, the monks were mixed together regardless of whether they were juniors or seniors.

17. There are various accounts of Chinese hermit monks living off of or supplementing their diet with parts of pine trees. Sprigs of new growth were eaten, as well as pine nuts.

When the poem was finished, he struck the right arm of his meditation seat with his right hand and said, "Enter my room for your spiritual interview." His topic for the spiritual interview was "The night bird cries out and the bamboo on the mountain splits open." These were his very words for the spiritual interview. He offered no commentary. Even though our monastic family was large, many had no response, as they were simply overawed.

This method of conducting a spiritual interview was not done anywhere else; only my late Master, the Old Buddha of Tendō, used it. During such informal teaching, my Master's seat was surrounded by screens which the community crowded around. While the monks remained standing, the interviews took place with whichever monk was prepared to enter the Abbot's presence. When a monk had finished his interview, he departed through the door of the Abbot's quarters in the customary manner. Those who remained, still standing as they were before, could see and hear everything, not only the dignified manner of stepping forward and then halting by the one entering for his interview, but also the deportment of the Abbot and his command for the next monk to enter. This ceremony never existed in other places, and it may be that other veteran Abbots were unable to do it. During interviews with other Masters, monks wanted to enter the Abbot's interview room before the others did, whereas in entering my Master's room, the monks wished to enter after the others. We should not forget that there are differences in people's minds and ways of behaving.

From that time until this first year of the Japanese Kangen era (1243), eighteen years have passed quickly within the changing scenery. I cannot remember how many mountains and bodies of water there have been between Mount Tendō and this mountain, but the Real Form of those beautiful words and wondrous phrases of my Master has been engraved on my body and mind, on my bones and marrow. I believe it would be difficult for monks in that monastic assembly to ever forget hearing the Dharma talk and entering for a spiritual interview on that occasion. On that night, the light of the new moon shone from behind the temple buildings and though, from time to time, a night bird would sing out, it was a night tranquil and still.

Great Master Gensha Shibi was once giving an informal talk when, upon hearing the chirping of some swallow chicks, he said, "How profoundly they discuss Real Form! How skillfully they expound the essence of the Dharma!" Thereupon, he stepped down from his Dharma seat.

> Then, a novice monk who was behind him, chasing after instruction, said, "I don't get it."
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> The Master said, "Oh, be off with you! There's no one who'd believe you."

Having heard Shibi's statement, "How profoundly they discuss Real Form," one might well take it to mean that swallow chicks alone profoundly discuss Real Form, but this is not so. During his informal talk, Shibi heard the chirping of some swallow chicks. It was not that the swallow chicks were profoundly discussing Real Form, and it was not that Shibi was profoundly discussing Real Form, and it was not a cross between the two, but it was that at that very moment itself, there was a profound discussion of Real Form.

We should take a moment to thoroughly explore this story. There is the informal instruction, hearing the swallow chicks' chirping, and the assertion, "How profoundly they discuss Real Form! How skillfully they expound the essence of the Dharma!" And there is Shibi's stepping down from his Dharma seat, the novice monk chasing behind him for instruction saying, "I don't get it," and the Master's response, "Oh, be off with you! There's no one who'd believe you." Although the statement, "I don't get it," need not necessarily be a request for instruction on Real Form, it <u>is</u> nevertheless the lifeblood of the Buddhas and Ancestors, and the very Bones and Marrow of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching.[18]

You need to comprehend that even if this monk, in seeking instruction, asserted either that he did or that he did not understand, Shibi should say to him, "Oh, be off with you! There's no one who'd believe you." Shibi said what he did not because the novice monk had said that he did not understand, but because the monk had already understood.[19] Truly, even though it could have been someone other than this monk, say, any third son of Mr. Chang or fourth son of Mr. Li, and even though all thoughts and things are Real Form, at the time and place when one penetrates directly into the Lifeblood of the Buddhas and Ancestors, one's exploring Real Form through one's training manifests just like this. This had already manifested by the time of Seigen's assembly.[20]

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18. That is, the remark is customarily understood by Buddhas and Ancestors to mean "I don't get It."

19. That is, the monk was trying to inveigle Shibi into discussing and intellectualizing what he had said.

20. That is, the exploration of Real Form had already begun generations earlier in the assembly of Seigen Gyōshi. Shibi was in Seigen's lineage, as was Dōgen.

Keep in mind that Real Form is the genuine Lifeblood which has been passed on from rightful heir to rightful heir, that all thoughts and things are what each and every Buddha has completely and thoroughly explored, and that each and every Buddha manifests His characteristic marks, just as they are.[21]

Given to the assembly during a day in the ninth lunar month of the first year of the Kangen era (October or November, 1243) at Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province, Japan.

21. That is, all Buddhas exhibit the characteristic marks and distinguishing signs of a Buddha, no matter how unique each Buddha may be.

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On Buddhist Scriptures

(Bukkyō)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse, Dōgen uses the word 'Scripture' to refer not only to the Scriptural writings of Buddhism but also to individual persons, as well as to all things in the universe, since each in its own way embodies the Dharma.

Dōgen proceeds to launch a highly charged attack on the founding Ancestors of two of the five traditions of Chinese Zen Buddhism, namely, those founded by Rinzai and Ummon, though he spares the tradition established by Ōbaku, who was Rinzai's Master. One can only speculate that the emotional tone of this attack arose from his desire to keep his disciples from trying to incorporate the practices of those traditions into their own practice and training.

Dōgen then extends his attack by taking on the so-called Chinese tripod theory, which was current in his day. According to this theory, Chinese culture and civilization are like a sacred vessel which gains its stability by being supported by three 'legs', namely, Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism. The theory was originally put forth by some Buddhists in an attempt to counter the argument that only Taoism and Confucianism were truly Chinese since these teachings were indigenous to China, whereas Buddhism was a foreign religion and therefore something superimposed on the Chinese culture. Dōgen argues against this by saying that if Taoism and Confucianism needed Buddhism to maintain cultural stability, then it would follow that Chinese Buddhism would also need Taoism and Confucianism because it likewise could not stand on its own. Therefore, those Buddhists who wanted to introduce Taoist or Confucianist elements into their training were not strengthening it, but diluting it with elements irrelevant to Buddhist practice.

Within the Buddhist Scriptures, there are methods for teaching bodhisattvas* and there are methods for teaching Buddhas. Both of these methods are tools of the Great Truth. These tools comply with their Owner, and the Owner uses His tools. Accordingly, the Buddhas and Ancestors in both the western land of India and in the eastern land of China were persons who, of necessity, followed some good spiritual friend or followed what the Scriptures taught, with never a gap in Their giving rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood, Their doing Their training and practice, and Their realizing the fruits thereof. In giving rise to Their intention to realize Buddhahood, They relied on Scriptural texts and spiritual friends, and in

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* See *Glossary.*

Their doing the training and practice, They relied on Scriptural texts and spiritual friends, and in Their realizing the fruits of Their practice, They also relied on Scriptural texts and spiritual friends. Our giving rise to our first spiritual intention and then later encountering the words of the Scriptures is likewise in harmony with Scriptural texts and spiritual friends. And if, amidst our giving rise to our intention, Scriptural verses arise within us, this too is in harmony with Scriptural texts and spiritual friends.

Spiritual friends, of necessity, have thoroughly penetrated the Scriptural texts. 'Thoroughly penetrated' means that they have made the Scriptures their homeland, and they have made Them their body and mind. They have set up the Scriptures for the sake of others and have made the Scriptures their parents and their offspring. Because spiritual friends have made the Scriptures into what they practice and understand, they have thoroughly explored Them. And a spiritual friend's washing his face and drinking his tea is also an ancient Scripture. And the saying, "Scriptures give birth to spiritual friends," describes, for instance, Ōbaku's bringing about the birth of a monastic offspring by giving him thirty blows with his staff. It also describes the three strikes that Daiman Kōnin gave which brought about the Transmission of the kesa* along with the Dharma.[1] And these two are not the only cases. There is the monk who awoke to the Truth upon seeing peach blossoms, and the monk who awoke to the Truth upon hearkening to bamboo being struck by a stone, and the One who awoke upon seeing the morning star—all are good examples of Scriptures giving birth to spiritual friends. And there have been 'skin bags and fisted ones' who, having first opened their Eye, benefited much from Scriptural texts. And there are also 'wooden ladles and jet-black buckets' who, having learned a great deal from Scriptural texts, then opened their Eye.[2]

What we call Scriptures is precisely the whole universe in all directions. There is no time or place that is not a Scripture. Some Scriptures make use of the language of Ultimate Reality, whereas others make use of the language of secular reality. Some make use of the language of celestial beings, whereas others make use of the language of human beings. Some make use of the language that animals

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1. The most notable Dharma heir of Ōbaku was Rinzai, the 'monastic offspring' referred to here. Daiman Kōnin Transmitted to Daikan Enō the bowl and kesa believed to have belonged to Shakyamuni Buddha.

2. 'Skin bags' is a metaphor for ordinary human beings. 'Fisted ones' is a metaphor for trainees whose Master raises a fist to show that the Ultimate is beyond words or concepts. 'Wooden ladles' refers to those who are trying to awaken to the Truth, and 'jet-black buckets' is a metaphor for monks who are ignorant of the essence of Buddhism.

speak, whereas others make use of the language that asuras* speak. Some make use of the words that sprout up like hundreds of grasses in a field, whereas others make use of the words that flourish like the thousands of trees in a woodland. Thus it is that what is long or short, square or round, as well as what is blue, yellow, red, or white, all of which are arrayed throughout the whole universe like ever so many trees in a forest, are the words of a Scripture; they are what appears on the surface of a Scriptural text. They serve as the tools of the Great Truth, which comprise what a Scripture is in Buddhist traditions. Such a Scripture can spread out and cover the whole of time, and It can flow out and cover all lands. It opens the gateway to teaching human beings without forsaking anyone anywhere. It opens the gateway to Scriptural matters and rescues all manner of beings everywhere. In teaching Buddhas and bodhisattvas, it becomes the whole of the earth, indeed, the whole of the universe. It opens the gateway to skillful means and the gateway to abiding in one's True Place. And, without forsaking a single person, or even half a one, It points to the true Real Form. The great intention of each Buddha and bodhisattva right now is to obtain much benefit from these Scriptures, even though this may not be something done intentionally by means of one's discriminative thinking and conscious endeavor, or by means of one's going beyond discriminative thinking and conscious endeavor.

The time of positively procuring a Scripture is beyond 'past and present', because past and present are simply moments in the time of 'procuring a Scripture'. What is manifesting right now before our very eyes is the whole universe in all ten directions. This is what 'procuring a Scripture' really means. In that such a Scripture has already been read, recited, and thoroughly penetrated, the Wisdom of Buddha, along with our natural innate wisdom and the wisdom acquired without a teacher, have already fully manifested before the arising of our own mind and body. At the moment when we encounter a Scripture, we do not doubt that we have entered a special state that is new to us. When this Scripture has been accepted by us and then passed on to others by our reading or reciting It, we can say that the Scripture has made full contact with us. This state of affairs quickly becomes a scattering of flowers and a making of garlands. At first we see only the words embedded within phrases, but there is 'something indescribable' to be found between the lines.

We call such Scriptures 'the Dharma'. They contain an accumulation of eighty-four thousand expressions of the Dharma. Within these Scriptures are such words as 'the Buddhas who have fully realized Universal Truth', 'the Buddhas who have appeared and are residing in the world right now,' and 'the Buddhas who have arrived and entered nirvana'. 'The One Who Comes in This Way' and 'The One Who Goes in That Way'—that is, the Tathagata—are both terms that appear in

these Scriptures and are expressions of the Dharma within the Dharma. 'Raising aloft the flower, with eyes atwinkle' and 'his face breaking into a smile'[3] are old Scriptures that have been accurately Transmitted from the Seven Buddhas.* And 'standing in the snow and severing one's arm' as well as 'respectfully bowing and securing the very Marrow of the Way' are expressions which encapsulate old Scriptures about Master and disciple truly hearing each other.[4] Ultimately, the Transmitting of the Dharma and the kesa to Daikan Enō was nothing other than the arrival of the moment when all the Scriptures were spread out and entrusted to him. The three strikes on the mortar by Daiman Kōnin and the response of three siftings of rice in the winnowing basket by Daikan Enō brought about a Scripture holding out His hand to a Scripture, whereby a Scripture made a Scripture His legitimate heir.

In addition, Enō's saying, "Who is this One that comes thus?" is a thousand Scriptures for teaching Buddhas and tens of thousands of Scriptures for teaching bodhisattvas. And Nangaku's reply, "For me to explain what even one thing is would not hit the mark," does well to account for the accumulation of the eighty-four thousand expressions of the Dharma, as well as the twelve divisions of the Mahayana* canon. And even more, a Master's fist and heel, his traveling staff* and ceremonial hossu,* are ancient Scriptures and new Scriptures, as well as Scriptures on what has limits and Scriptures on That which is without limits. From the first, doing one's utmost in training within the Sangha and diligently doing seated meditation are Buddhist Scriptures, and they are Buddhist Scriptures right to the end. They are Scriptures written on leaves from the Bodhi tree; they are Scriptures written upon the vast expanse of sky.

In short, the one moment of movement and the two moments of stillness which the Buddhas and Ancestors have exhibited, as well as Their holding on and Their letting go are, naturally enough, the unrolling of Buddhist Scriptures. Because They have explored through Their training that the ultimate standard is that there is no absolute ultimate, They have inhaled and expelled the Scriptures through Their nostrils and They have absorbed and expelled the Scriptures through

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3. This is a reference to Shakyamuni Buddha's Transmitting the Dharma to His smiling disciple Makakashō by holding an udumbara flower aloft.

4. The reference to cutting off one's arm is to the Second Chinese Ancestor, Taiso Eka, who is said to have cut off his arm in order to find the Truth. This 'severing' may refer to giving up one's attachments rather than to a literal, physical act. Dōgen fully explores the reference to respectful bowing in Discourse 10: On 'Respectful Bowing Will Secure for You the Very Marrow of the Way' *(Raihai Tokuzui)*.

Their toes. 'Before "father" and "mother" had yet been born',* there was a taking in and expelling of Scriptures, and before the Lords of Awe-inspiring Voices appeared, there was a taking in and expelling of Scriptures. We receive Scriptures and give expression to Scriptures by means of the whole earth with its mountains and rivers, and we receive Scriptures and give expression to Scriptures by means of the sun, moon, and stars. Some Buddhas and Ancestors have held to the Scriptures by means of the Self that existed before the kalpa* of emptiness, and Some have held onto the Scriptures by means of the body and mind that They had before They had a countenance. Scriptures like these were brought into view by Their breaking open a dust mote or by Their breaking open the whole universe.

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Our great Twenty-seventh Ancestor, the Venerable Hannyatara,[5] once said:

> In my humble way, what I breathe out does not conform itself to external conditions and events, and what I breathe in does not take up residence in the realm of my skandhas.* The Scriptures that I recite are always like this, for they are comprised of hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of scrolls, not just one or two scrolls.

Hearing what our Ancestral Master said in this way, we should explore through our training that she caused the Scriptures to revolve with her every exhalation and inhalation. To understand 'revolving the Scriptures' in this way is to know wherein the Scriptures reside. Because she could revolve Them and there was something to revolve, which was her revolving the Scriptures and the Scriptures revolving her, she must have totally understood and recognized what They are.[6]

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My late Master was constantly saying:

> Here in my temple, you should simply sit in meditation without having recourse to burning incense, making bows, reciting the name of Buddha, confessing your shortcomings, or reciting Scriptures. Just do your utmost to practice the Way and drop off body and mind.

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5. There is a long-standing Indian tradition which holds that Hannyatara was a female monk renowned for her extraordinary spiritual prowess.

6. Dōgen has an extensive commentary on Hannyatara's remarks in Discourse 20: On Reading Scriptures (*Kankin*).

Few are the folks who understand a remark like this. And why? Because if they were to take the phrase ‘reciting Scriptures’ literally, they would be violating its intention, and if they were not to take the phrase ‘reciting Scriptures’ literally, they would be turning their back on his words. We cannot have words for It and we do not lack words for It. So, quick, quick! Speak, speak! You must explore this fundamental principle through your training! Because this principle exists, a Master of long ago said, “To read Scriptures, you will need to be equipped with an Eye for reading Scriptures.” By all means you need to realize that if there had not been Scriptures in the past and in the present, there could not be such a statement as this. You need to explore through your training that there is the reading of a Scripture called ‘dropping off’ and there is the reading of a Scripture called ‘without having recourse’. Since this is so, each person—or even half a person—who does the training will, without question, receive the Transmission and become a child of the Buddha, so do not foolishly study the false views of non-Buddhists. Because the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is now fully manifesting before your very eyes, is what the Buddhist Scriptures are, every Buddhist Scripture is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. They are beyond being the same or different, beyond being self or other. Keep in mind that because the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching is ever so abundant, none of you will be able to illumine It completely.[7] And even so, you will be able to expound upon the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching without ever failing to trust in It. And so it will be with the Buddhist Scriptures. Though the Scriptures are ever so many, you need but trust and accept Them, and put into practice a single verse or phrase from Them. You need not fully comprehend all eighty-four thousand of Them. Just because you cannot be expert in all the Buddhist Scriptures, do not be rash and say that the Buddhist Scriptures are not the Buddha Dharma. Even though you may hear others call themselves the very bones and marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors, when we look with straightforward eyes at those who speak this way, we see that they are simply present-day trainees who are stuck on words. While some of them may be as good as those who accept and keep to a single phrase or a single verse, there may also be those who do not measure up to them. Do not insult the Buddha’s True Teaching by relying on this superficial understanding of theirs. Nothing in the world of sound and form is more spiritually meritorious than the Buddhist Scriptures. Sounds and forms may delude you if you are still greedily chasing after them. However, the Buddhist Scriptures will never delude you, so do not mistrust or slander Them.

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7. That is, realizing enlightenment does not mean becoming omniscient.

Even so, over the last couple of centuries or so in Great Sung China, certain mistaken, smelly skin bags have said, "There's no need for you to keep the sayings of the Ancestral Masters in mind, much less is there any need for long study of Scriptural Teachings or for your trying to make use of Them. Simply, make your body and mind like a dead tree or cold ashes, like a broken wooden ladle or a bottomless tub." Folks like these have become a type of non-Buddhist or celestial demon, and to no good purpose. They seek to make use of things that are useless, and accordingly, they twist the Teachings of the Buddhas and Ancestors into wild and perverted teaching. What a pity! How terribly sad! Even 'broken ladles' and 'bottomless tubs' have been ancient Scriptures for some Ancestors of the Buddha. Rare has been the Ancestor of the Buddha who has completely tallied the number of texts of these Scriptures. Those who say that the Buddhist Scriptures are not the Buddha Dharma have not studied the occasions when Ancestors of the Buddha have made use of Scriptures, nor have they explored through their training the occasions when Ancestors of the Buddha have revealed their True Nature through their reliance on Scriptures, nor do they know how to gauge the level of intimacy between the Buddha's Ancestors and the Buddhist Scriptures. Careless folks like these are as common as rice and flax seeds, bamboo canes and reeds. They ascend the Lion Throne* and establish monasteries everywhere, passing themselves off as teachers of gods and humans. Because the inaccurate have studied with the inaccurate, their principles are likewise inaccurate, and because they are ignorant, they fail to seek what is reliable, but simply pass from darkness into darkness. How pitiful! And because they have not realized the Body and Mind of Buddha Dharma, they do not know what the deportment of body and the behavior of mind should be. Since they have not clarified what lies at the heart of either existence or emptiness, if someone should ask them a question about this, they may arbitrarily raise a fist, but they are really in the dark as to what it means to make such a gesture. Since they have not clarified which paths are genuine and which are false, if someone should ask them a question about this, they hold up a ceremonial hossu, but they are not clear as to the significance of holding it up. Or, in a misguided attempt to offer a helping hand for someone's sake, they may cite Rinzai's *Four Perspectives* or his *Four Relations Between Reflecting and Acting,* or quote Ummon's *Three Phrases* or Tōzan's *Three Paths* or his *Five Relative Positions* as standards for study of the Way.[8]

8. Dōgen's apparently negative view of Tōzan's two treatises in the present context is clarified later in this discourse.

My late Master, the monk of Tendō, was always laughing at this and would say:

> How could 'learning what Buddha is' possibly be like that? We have clothed both our body and our mind with the Great Truth that the Buddhas and Ancestors have authentically Transmitted. In exploring this through our training and in aiming at mastering it through and through, we have no time to spare. What free time do we have for including the dubious remarks of modern-day trainees? Truly, you need to realize that old senior monks all over Great Sung China are lacking in the Truth, and it is clear that they are not exploring through their training what the Body and Mind of the Buddha Dharma is.

This is how my late Master pointed out the Matter* to his assembly.

To tell the truth, in the case of Rinzai, he was a newcomer in Ōbaku's assembly. Ōbaku had already used his staff to inflict sixty blows on Rinzai before the latter left to make a formal call on Daigu, with whom he had a meeting to discuss the mind of a certain old woman. This Dharma conversation helped to illumine matters in his daily conduct and, as a consequence, he returned to Ōbaku. Because those who heard this account were deeply impressed by it, they believed that Rinzai and he alone had received Ōbaku's Buddha Dharma, and, moreover, they even fancied that Rinzai had surpassed Ōbaku. But this is simply not so.

Although it must be said that Rinzai had barely entered Ōbaku's assembly and was as yet the juniormost monk at the time, nevertheless, when the venerable senior monk Chin prompted him to ask his spiritual question, Rinzai did not know what to say.[9] Even though someone has not yet clarified what the Great Matter is, how could anyone who is committed to exploring It through their training fail to rise to the occasion while listening to the Dharma and simply be dumbstruck like that? You should realize that such a one is not foremost in ability. Further, Rinzai never had the ardor of his celebrated Master, and we have yet to hear of any

9. Chin was one of Ōbaku's Dharma heirs and succeeded him as Abbot upon Ōbaku's death. The situation described here probably refers to the question asked by the Abbot or a senior monk of someone who has come to a temple for the first time. It is usually ambiguous, thereby inviting the potential trainee to respond in a socially conventional way or to see the deeper, spiritual meaning embedded in the question, which calls for a spiritually focused response. Apparently, Rinzai was totally nonplussed and could not come up with a reply on either side, much less with a question.

sayings of his that surpass those of his Master. Ōbaku, though, did have ways of putting things which evinced a greater wisdom than that of his own Master. And he could put into words Teachings that even the Buddha had not yet uttered, and he had an understanding of the Dharma that even the Ancestors had not yet fathomed. Ōbaku was an Old Buddha who transcended both past and present. He was more highly esteemed than Hyakujō and was of even greater genius than Baso. Rinzai lacked such an eminent spirit. And why? Because he never made any remark, not even in his dreams, which had not already been expressed in the past or present. It is as if he merely understood the many and overlooked the One, or grasped the One and overlooked the many. How can we possibly think that his *Four Perspectives* partake of the flavor of the Dharma or that it serves as a compass that points the correct way to explore the Teaching?

Ummon was a member of Seppō's community. Even though he functioned as a great teacher for all manner of people, it must be said that he was still one of those who are stuck on erudition. Should you attempt to find the Source by relying on people like him, you would simply end up on some paltry tributary. In the times before Rinzai arrived and Ummon appeared, what, pray, did the Buddhas and Ancestors rely upon as Their standard for exploring the Way? Hence, you need to understand that within the houses of Rinzai and Ummon, the proper training of the Buddha's tradition was not passed on. Because they had nothing authoritative to rely upon, they recklessly put forth their own questionable teachings. Such fellows irresponsibly slandered the Buddhist Scriptures, so you people should not follow them in that. If the Scriptures are to be cast aside, then the teachings of Rinzai and Ummon should also be cast aside. If we cannot make use of the Scriptures, then we will have no water to drink, much less a ladle to scoop it up with.

Further, our founding Ancestor Tōzan's *Three Paths* and *Five Relative Positions*, which detail the Matter, are frankly beyond anything that the careless and inaccurate are able to understand. The underlying principle was accurately Transmitted to him and he forthwith pointed out what proper Buddhist conduct is. We should not presume to liken his teaching to that of other traditions.

Also, there are irresponsible people who say, "Although they are different to begin with, the teachings of Taoism, the teachings of Confucianism, and the Scriptures of Shakyamuni ultimately have the same goal. They are just different ways for entering the gate to Truth." Or they may say, "They are like the three legs of a tripod." This is at the heart of a hot debate among present-day monks in Great Sung China. When people speak like this, the Buddha Dharma has already been banished from the earth and perished for them. And we should also say that not even a smidgen of the Buddha's Teaching has ever come to them. People like this rashly attempt to express what Buddha Dharma is even though they are blocked

from penetrating It. They erroneously say that the Buddhist Scriptures are of no use because there is a separate Transmission in the tradition of our ancestral Master Bodhidharma.[10] They are small-minded people who have not inquired into what the boundaries really are in the Way of the Buddhas. They say that one need not make use of Buddhist Scriptures, but what about our Master Bodhidharma's poem? Do they make use of it or do they feel that they do not need it? There are many instances of Teaching in what our Ancestor said that are just like what is in Buddhist Scriptures. Would they have us use his Teaching or discard It? Were they to say that our Ancestor's Truth is not the Buddha's Truth, who then would trust our Ancestor's Truth? Our Ancestral Master is an Ancestral Master because the Buddha's Truth was authentically Transmitted to him. If there were someone who had not received the authentic Transmission of the Buddha's Truth, who, pray, would call him 'my Ancestral Master'?

We venerate Bodhidharma as our First Chinese Ancestor because he was our Twenty-eighth Indian Ancestor. If we say that what our Ancestor said was apart from what the Buddha said, it would be difficult indeed to establish who our Tenth or our Twentieth Ancestor was! The reason that we revere our Ancestral Teachers who have received the Transmission in turn, heir after heir, is due to the importance of the Buddha's Truth. If there were one of our Ancestral Masters who had not had the Buddha's Truth authentically Transmitted to him, how would he be able to face either ordinary people or those in higher realms? And what would be more difficult still would be to turn aside from our most profound intention to realize Buddhahood in order to follow some teacher who had no connection with the Buddha's Way!

Untrustworthy crazies today vainly sneer at the Buddha's Truth because they are unable to determine which teaching <u>is</u> the Buddha's Truth. For them to compare, even for a moment, Taoist or Confucian doctrines with the Buddha's Teaching is not only pitiable folly, it is also the karmic* consequence of their wrongful deeds in past lives and signals the decline of their nation, because it belittles the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. The paths of

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10. This view, which Dōgen considered to be erroneous, derives from a misinterpretation of a poem attributed to Bodhidharma, which has been interpreted by some as a rejection of Scriptural texts. Dōgen's view is that the Scriptural texts and the pointing to the heart are two aspects of what is Transmitted. Bodhidharma's poem is as follows:

> *The separate Transmission that is outside the Teachings*
> *Does not depend on the written word;*
> *It directly points us to our human heart,*
> *So that we may see our True Nature and thereby become Buddha.*

Confucius and Lao-tzu are in no way the same as the path of an arhat,* to say nothing of the paths of those in the two highest states of bodhisattvahood! Confucius and Lao-tzu were barely able to read the great wonders of heaven and earth and see in them what the saintly saw and heard. It would have been hard for them to clarify in one lifetime, or even in many lifetimes, just what our Great Saintly Shakyamuni's law of causality is. They could just barely discern the sitting place of body and mind that is found within the activity of 'non-activity', but they were unable to clarify what the Universal Truth within the limitlessness of every moment truly is. In short, the Confucian and Taoist teachings are so inferior to the Teachings of the Buddha that the differences cannot even begin to be described by terms like 'the separation between heaven and earth'. To recklessly discuss them as all having one and the same principle is to slander the Buddha Dharma and to slander Confucianism and Taoism. Even though there are some accurate points in the teachings of those two, our present day veteran monks have not even clarified a fraction of those points, much less have they grabbed hold of the Great Handle even once in ten thousand tries! Although instruction and training can be found in the works of both of these, ordinary, run-of-the-mill scholars today cannot readily follow it. There is none in that bunch who could even try to do that training. They cannot even connect one bit of teaching with another. How much less could these present-day veteran monks possibly realize the profound subtleties of Buddhist Scriptures! Not having clarified what the other two are actually about, they just irresponsibly put forth their own questionable teachings.

In Great Sung China today, such fellows ascribe the title of master to themselves as proof that they are entitled to take up the profession. Without shame for past or present, and with a befuddled mind, they make a mishmash of what the Buddha said. It is difficult to acknowledge that they have received the Buddha Dharma. Monks like these all say, "The Buddhist Scriptures do not contain the original intention behind what the Buddha said. The Ancestral Transmission contains what His original intention was. In the Ancestral Transmission alone, that which is mysterious, unique, profound, and wondrous has been passed on."

Saying things like this is the extreme in silliness. It is what the deranged say. In the authentic Transmission of our Ancestral Masters, there is nothing mysterious or special that in any way differs in even one remark or half a verse from what is in the Buddhist Scriptures. The Buddhist Scriptures and the sayings of our Ancestors are both alike as to what has been authentically Transmitted, which has flowed out from Shakyamuni Buddha. But the Ancestral Transmission has been Transmitted only from heir to heir. Given that, how could such heirs possibly not know Buddhist Scriptures, or fail to clarify them, or fail to recite them? An ancient worthy once said, "You are deluding yourself with the Scriptures: the Scriptures

are not deluding you." There are many stories about ancient worthies reading Scriptures.

What I would like to say to those who are inaccurate is the following: "If it were as you say, then if you throw out Buddhist Scriptures, you will be throwing out the Buddha's Mind, as well as His Body. If you throw out His Body and Mind, then you will be throwing out His disciples. If you throw out His disciples, you will be throwing out the Way of the Buddhas. If you throw out the Way of the Buddhas, will you not be throwing out the Way of the Ancestors? Were you to throw out both the Way of the Buddhas and the Way of the Ancestors, you would be just one more shaven head among a hundred others. Who could then say that you did not deserve a good thwack! Not only would you be at the beck and call of every lord and his retainers, you will also be called to account by Old Yama, Lord of the Dead."

Old veteran monks in present-day China no sooner receive a note from some lord or retainer than they proclaim themselves to be the Abbot of a temple and, on that basis, go around mouthing wild words like those alluded to above. And there is no one to distinguish right from wrong. Only my late Master, and he alone, would break out into laughter over that bunch. None of the senior monks from other monasteries recognized what was going on.

As a rule, we should not think that just because monks come from foreign parts they must have a clearer understanding of the Way, or that because they are teachers of some emperor of a great nation they must invariably have penetrated the Matter. All foreigners do not necessarily have the makings of a monk: good people are good and wicked people are wicked. Within the three worlds of the universe, the potential of people will be the same.

Likewise, those who have realized the Truth are not necessarily the ones who are chosen to be teachers to emperors of great nations, since emperors also have difficulty in knowing who has realized the Way. They simply make their appointments on the basis of the advice they hear from their retainers. In past and present, there have been imperial teachers who have realized the Truth and imperial teachers who have not realized the Truth. It is the unenlightened person who gets appointed in corrupt times, just as it is the enlightened person who does not get appointed in those times. And why is that? Because there are times when 'such a person'* is recognized and times when 'such a person' is not recognized. We should not forget the age-old example of Jinshū.[11] Jinshū became an imperial

11. Jinshū was the most outstanding monk in Daiman Kōnin's huge assembly on Mount Ōbai. Only Daikan Enō, who was a lay laborer in the monastery at that time, was able to

teacher. He lectured on the Dharma while seated before the bamboo curtain of the emperor and he gave voice to the Dharma while seated before the gilded screen of the empress. And what is more, he held the highest seat among the seven hundred high-ranking monks of Kōnin's assembly. And at the same time, long ago on Mount Ōbai there was the temple laborer named Ro.[12] By changing his occupation from woodcutter to temple laborer, he freed himself from hauling firewood. Even so, he took up the occupation of pounding the temple's rice. Though some may feel sorry that he was of humble birth, he nevertheless left secular life behind him and even transcended monkhood, for he had realized the Dharma and had had the sacred robe passed on to him while still a lay person. This is something that was unheard of in the past, not even in India to the west, and it constitutes a remarkable precedent set in the eastern land of China. It is as if even the seven hundred high-ranking monks did not compare with him nor could the dragon elephants* of his whole nation follow in his footsteps. He is truly an heir of the Buddha who has taken his position as our Ancestor of the thirty-third generation after Shakyamuni. If our Fifth Chinese Ancestor Daiman Kōnin had not been a true spiritual friend and guide who was able to recognize 'such a person', how, pray, could this possibly have come about as it did? Quietly reflect on this principle and do not be hasty. We should desire to develop the ability to recognize 'such a one'. To fail to do so is a great sorrow for both oneself and others, a great sorrow for our whole nation. Broad knowledge and a superior view of things are not necessary. You need only to seek the Eye that recognizes 'such a person' and quickly develop your abilities to do so. Should you lack the ability to recognize 'such a one', you will sink into ages of darkness.

Hence, you need to realize that, beyond doubt, there are Buddhist Scriptures within the Way of the Buddha. You need to explore the extensive texts and the profound meaning of Their mountains and rivers, and you should make these Scriptures your standard for doing your utmost to train in the Way.[13]

Given to the assembly during the ninth lunar month of the first year of the Kangen era (October 1243) while residing at Kippō-ji Temple in the Yoshida district of Echizen Province.

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demonstrate a deeper understanding of the Dharma, and he thereby became Kōnin's Dharma heir and the recipient of the bowl and robe of Bodhidharma.

12. Ro was the family name of Daikan Enō.

13. In this context, 'mountains and rivers' can be seen as aspects of movement and stillness within meditation practice. It can also describe obstructions that are encountered in our daily experience, and hence to the Scriptures' Teachings on how to overcome those obstructions.

51

On the Buddha's Way

(Butsudō)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse, Dōgen takes to task the common view that there are five Chinese Zen sects—namely, Sōtō, Rinzai, Hōgen, Igyō, and Ummon—which are different and have unique ways of training and teaching. Dōgen argues that there is only one way, the Buddha's Way, and that this Way is the same for all authentic expressions of Buddhism and is encapsulated in the phrase, 'the Transmission of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana'. He does, however, recognize that there are various lineages within Buddhism, but states that they all share the same underlying Truth of the Buddha's Way and do not constitute unrelated or unique ways of training.

The Old Buddha Enō once addressed his assembly, saying, "From me back to the Seven Buddhas,* there have been forty Ancestors." When we thoroughly explore this statement, we see that he means there are forty Buddhas coming down from the Seven Buddhas to Daikan Enō. When we count Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor, this is how we count Them. When we count Them like this, the Seven Buddhas are seven Ancestors and the thirty-three Ancestors are thirty-three Buddhas. This is the thrust of what Daikan Enō is saying. This is the Buddha's instruction for genuine Dharma heirs; only the inheritors of the genuine Transmission have had passed on to them the genuine method of counting.

From Shakyamuni Buddha down to Daikan Enō, there have been thirty-four Ancestors. This Transmission from Buddha to Ancestor—Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor—has been just like Makakashō's having a mutual encounter with the Tathagata and the Tathagata bringing out a smile from Makakashō.[1]

Just as Shakyamuni Buddha explored the Matter* through His training with Kāshyapa Buddha,[2] so it is with Master and disciple today. As a result, the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching has been personally Transmitted

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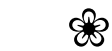
* See *Glossary*.

1. Makakashō was Shakyamuni Buddha's Dharma heir.

2. During a previous life.

from Dharma heir to Dharma heir. The true life of the Buddha Dharma is nothing other than this authentic Transmission. Because the Buddha Dharma has been authentically Transmitted in this manner, it has been passed along by Dharma heir after Dharma heir.

Hence, the meritorious behavior and the essential operation of the Way of the Buddhas have been inherent within each of them, without exception. The Way of the Buddhas has been passed on from India in the west to China in the east, a distance of some hundred and eight thousand miles, and It has been passed on from the time when the Buddha was in the world down to this very day, a span of some two thousand years. Those folks who have not explored this fundamental principle through training with a Master arbitrarily say such wild and mistaken things as calling the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, 'the Zen sect,' or they call our Ancestral Masters 'Zen Patriarchs', or they declare academic teachers to be Zen Masters, or call them 'Zen monks', or call themselves 'devotees of Zen'. These are all branches and leaves who take warped views to be the root. In India and China from ancient times down to the present day, no one has ever spoken of 'the Zen sect', which is the term by which these people arbitrarily refer to themselves. Such people are demons out to destroy the Buddha's Way. They are a malicious group who are enemies to the Ancestors of the Buddha.



It says in the *Forest Records*:[3]

> Bodhidharma first went from the kingdom of Liang to the kingdom of Wei. He traveled to the foot of Mount Sūzan and rested his traveling staff at Shōrin-ji Temple. He simply sat in stillness, facing a wall: he was not engaged in learning how to meditate. For a long time no one could figure out why he was doing that and, consequently, interpreted it as his learning how to meditate.
>
> Now, meditation in its narrow sense is simply one among various practices, so how could it suffice to say that this was all there was to the Saintly One? Yet, people of his time did just that. Those engaged in making chronicles followed suit and reported him as being among the ranks of those learning how to meditate and grouped him

3. *Sekimon*, a twelfth-century work by Kakuhan Ekō, a Rinzai monk, which he compiled while he was staying at Sekimon Temple.

> with people who are as dead trees or cold ashes.[4] Even so, the Saintly One's practice did not simply stop at doing meditation; he also did not act contrary to meditation. And even with the yin and yang described in the *Book of Changes*, he did not act contrary to yin and yang.

Bodhidharma's being called the Twenty-eighth Ancestor is based on the virtuous monk Makakashō's being called the First Ancestor. He is the Thirty-fifth Ancestor when counting from Bibashi Buddha.[5] And not all of the Seven Buddhas and those of the twenty-eight generations who followed Them were able to awaken to the Truth just by means of formal meditation practice. This is why the old Master of Sekimon said, "Meditation in its narrow sense is simply one among various practices, so how could it suffice to say that this was all there was to the Saintly One?"

This old Master had come to see a bit of what people are really like and had entered the inner meaning of the doctrines of our Ancestral tradition. This was why he spoke as he did. In recent times throughout Great Sung China, it would be difficult to find such a one as he, and we should be thankful to meet such a one. And even if formal meditation were the central practice, we should not name it 'the Zen sect'.[6] And what is more, formal meditation practice is not the whole essence of what the Buddha taught.[7]

Even so, folks who willfully call the great Way that has been genuinely Transmitted from Buddha to Buddha 'the Zen sect' have not yet encountered the Way of the Buddhas even in their dreams, nor heard of It in their dreams, nor had It Transmitted to them in their dreams. Do not even suggest that the Buddha Dharma may exist among that bunch who identify themselves as belonging to 'the Zen sect'. Who was it that invented the name 'the Zen sect'? Surely it was not called the Zen sect by any of the Buddhas, Ancestors, and Masters in our lineage. Keep in mind that the name 'the Zen sect' is one used by Mara, the lord of demons, and it is

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4. 'Dead trees and cold ashes' is a common Zen Buddhist figure of speech for someone who has dropped off self. In the present context, it implies that Bodhidharma had gone just so far in his practice, but no further.

5. Bibashi Buddha is the first of the Seven Buddhas, the last of whom is Shakyamuni Buddha.

6. Dōgen's term *zenshū* can be rendered not only as the Zen sect but also as the Zen school, the Zen Church, the Meditation School, etc.

7. That is, there is also living in accord with the Precepts and, for monastics, the monastic rules and procedures, as well as the Bodhisattva Vows.

his band of devils that customarily use Mara's term: it is not the descendants of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

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Once when the World-honored One held up an udumbara blossom before an assembly of millions on Vulture Peak, His eyes atwinkle, the whole assembly fell silent. Only the face of the honorable Makakashō broke into a smile. Thereupon, the World-honored One said, "I confer upon Makakashō my Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, along with my sanghati robe."[8]

What the World-honored One conferred upon the virtuous monk Makakashō was His Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana. He did not add, "I confer upon Makakashō my Zen sect." He said, "along with my sanghati robe." He did not say, "along with the Zen sect." Accordingly, the name 'Zen sect' was never heard whilst the World-honored One was in the world.

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> Our First Chinese Ancestor, Bodhidharma, in pointing out the matter to our Second Ancestor, Eka, said, "The unsurpassed and wondrous Way of the Buddhas requires difficult and painful training, as well as the ability to bear what is difficult to bear, and all this over innumerable periods of time. Why would anyone desire the True Vehicle whilst having only little virtue and less wise discernment, or whilst having a belittling mind and a slothful attitude?" He also said, "The Dharma seal* of the Buddhas is not something to be obtained from worldly folk." And he also said, "The Tathagata conferred the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching upon the virtuous monk Makakashō by means of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching."

What is now being pointed to is the unsurpassed and wondrous Way of the Buddhas, along with the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching and the Buddha seal of the Buddhas. At that time there was no mention whatsoever of a 'Zen sect', nor was there any cause or condition for calling anything 'the Zen sect'.

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8. The sanghati robe is one of the three types of robe that were allowed to Buddhist monks at that time. Dōgen gives a detailed explanation of each type of robe in Discourse 84: On the Spiritual Merits of the Kesa *(Kesa Kudoku).*

Now, the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching had come to be Transmitted face-to-face by the raising of eyebrows and the twinkling of eyes. It has come to be bestowed with body and mind, bones and marrow. It has come to be accepted with body and mind, bones and marrow. It has been Transmitted and accepted from a previous Self to a later Self; it has been Transmitted and accepted above and beyond the ordinary mind. Within the assembly of the World-honored One and Makakashō the term 'Zen sect' was not heard; within the assemblies of our First and Second Chinese Ancestors, the term 'Zen sect' was not heard; within the assembly of our Fifth and Sixth Ancestors, the term 'Zen sect' was not heard; within the assembly of Seigen and Nangaku, the term 'Zen sect' was not heard. There is no indication of who it was that came to use the term or when it came about. Perhaps those scholars who should not be counted as real scholars, those whose ulterior motive was to destroy the Dharma or to plagiarize It, may have come to use the term. If present-day students of the Way carelessly use a term that the Buddhas and Ancestors had not permitted, they may well miss the gateway to our tradition.

Further, it makes it seem as if there is another method of training called 'the Zen sect', a method that is different from the one used by Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor. If there is a method that is different from the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors, it will be a method of non-Buddhists. Since you are already the offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors, you should explore through your training the Bones and Marrow, as well as the appearance, of the Buddhas and Ancestors. You have already embarked on the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors, so do not depart from It and explore non-Buddhist ways. It is rare for us to have the opportunity to obtain and preserve the body and mind of a human being, and this present opportunity is due to the supporting merit from our doing our utmost to practice the Way in the past. Should you mistakenly support non-Buddhist ways after having received this benevolent gift, you will not be repaying your indebtedness to the Buddhas and Ancestors.

During recent generations in Great Sung China, there have been many common folk throughout the land who have heard this erroneous name of 'the Zen sect' and therefore speak of 'the Zen sect', or speak of 'the Bodhidharma sect', or speak of 'the Buddha Mind sect'. These wrong names are bruited about, competing with each other and corrupting the Buddha's Way. These names are the wild rantings of people who do not know the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors and who have never encountered, or even heard about, the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. Much less do they believe that It exists! How could anyone who knows the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching call the Buddha's Way by a wrong name?

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This is why Sekitō Kisen, in ascending to the Dharma seat, addressed his great assembly saying, "The Dharma Gate that I have accepted has been Transmitted to me by a previous Buddha. It has been done without getting involved in discussions of contemplative meditation or of diligence in practice. It was given solely that I might master the wise perception of a Buddha."

You need to know that Ancestors of the Buddha who have received the authentic Transmission from the Seven Buddhas, as well as from all other Buddhas, express Themselves like this. The only words they speak are "The Dharma Gate that I have accepted has been Transmitted to me by a previous Buddha." Sekitō did not say, "The Zen sect that I have accepted has been Transmitted to me by a previous Buddha." He did not get into arguments about such topics as contemplative meditation or diligence in practice. What was given to him was given solely for the purpose that he might master the wise perception of a Buddha. It was solely the wise perception of a Buddha which he was to master—and without being averse to contemplative meditation and diligence in practice. This is equivalent to the statement, "I confer my Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching." 'My' means 'what I possess'. 'The Dharma Gate' means 'the True Teaching'. 'My', 'what I possess', and 'my Marrow' are what <u>you</u> receive through Transmission.

Great Master Sekitō Kisen was the sole Dharma heir of the Founding Ancestor Seigen Gyōshi and was the only one permitted to enter his Master's private quarters. And Seigen was a Dharma offspring of the Old Buddha Daikan Enō, who shaved his head.[9] Thus, the Old Buddha Daikan Enō was Seigen's Ancestor, as well as his monastic father, and the Founding Ancestor Seigen was Sekitō's elder brother in the Sangha, as well as his Master. As a hero in the Buddha's Way and in the stream of the Ancestors, Great Master Sekitō Kisen stands alone. Only Sekitō, and he alone, mastered the authentic Transmission in the Way of the Buddhas. All the instances of his bringing the Teaching to fruition which he manifested through words were the timeless acts of an Old Buddha manifesting His eternal presence. We should regard Sekitō as possessing the Eye of the Treasure House of the True Teaching; he is not to be compared with self or other. Ignorant people are wrong to compare him with Baso.[10]

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9. That is, he ordained Seigen as a monk.

10. Better known as Baso Dōitsu, a contemporaneous monk in Rinzai's lineage.

So, you need to keep in mind that the Buddha's Way, which was Transmitted and received from a previous Buddha, was not called 'contemplative meditation', much less was it ever called, or discussed as, 'the Zen sect'! Clearly, you need to realize that calling It 'the Zen sect' is a mistake of enormous proportions. By thinking that religious practice must be part of either a concrete sect or an abstract sect, the inexperienced defame the Way, as if It were something not worth exploring if It were not called 'a sect'. The Buddha's Way cannot be like that, so be certain that It has never been called 'the Zen sect'.

At the same time, the mainstream of people in recent generations are befuddled and do not know the old customs. That bunch who have not received Transmission from a past Buddha mistakenly say, "Within the Buddha Dharma, there are the methods and customs of the five sects." This is the natural progression of a decline in the Teaching. There has not yet been one person, or even half a person, who is able to halt It.[11] My late Master Tendō, an Old Buddha, was the first to show concern for this situation, due to his mastery of the Dharma, and to our good fortune.

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My late Master, an Old Buddha, once ascended the Dharma seat and addressed his assembly, saying, "People nowadays just talk of there being separate traditions and customs, such as those of Ummon, Hōgen, Igyō, Rinzai, and Sōtō, but this is not the Buddha's Teaching, nor is it what Ancestors and Masters say." The opportunity to hear someone addressing the assembly in this way has been difficult to encounter even in a thousand years. My late Master alone expressed it like this. It is hard to hear such Teaching anywhere throughout the ten quarters, and only those in his assembly were able to hear it. Even so, among a thousand monks, many are those whose ears do not truly hear and whose eyes do not truly see. Even less do they hear with their hearts, and less still do they hear with their whole being! Even if someone had listened with the whole of his own body and mind for millions of myriad eons, he could never have made use of my late Master's awakened body and mind to listen to it, or awaken to it, or develop faith in it, or to drop body and mind off. Sad to say, everyone within the ten directions of Great Sung China considered the old veteran monks of other monasteries to be on a par with my late Master. Should we consider folks who thought like this to be

11. 'Person', here, refers to one who is fully enlightened, whereas 'half a person' is someone who is partially enlightened.

equipped with eyes, or should we consider that they were not yet equipped with the Eye?

Further, there were some who viewed my late Master as standing shoulder-to-shoulder with Rinzai and Tokusan. We can surely say that these folks had likewise never encountered my late Master nor had they ever met up with Rinzai. Before I had done my respectful bows to my late Master,[12] an Old Buddha, I had already aimed at thoroughly exploring the so-called 'deeper principles of the five sects'. After I had done my respectful bows to my late Master, the Old Buddha, I clearly understood that 'the five sects' was just an arbitrary name.

Because this is so, there was no such term as 'the five sects' at the time when the Buddha's Teaching was flourishing in Great Sung China, nor did anyone of even more ancient times put forth the term 'the five sects'. Now that the Buddha's Teaching is beginning to decay, the term 'the five sects' emerges from time to time. This is because people are confused in their explorations of the Matter and are not committed to their pursuit of the Way. To all of you trainees who are sincerely seeking to thoroughly explore the Matter through your training, I loathe having to warn you that you must not hold onto these arbitrary terms for five sects. Do not take such terms to be representative of the traditions and customs of five separate families. How much less should you hold onto terms such as 'the three profundities and the three necessities' and 'the four perspectives and the four modes of reflection and action' associated with Rinzai's lineage, to say nothing of 'the three phrases' attributed to Rinzai, 'the five levels' of Tōzan and Sōzan, and 'the ten types of Truth, which are the same for all Masters' that is associated with Fun'yō!

What our Master Shakyamuni Buddha said was not as narrow in perspective as all this, and He did not value this type of thinking highly. This was not the sort of thing that was taught at Shōrin-ji Monastery or upon Mount Sōkei.[13] Sad to say, it is what the shaven-headed trainees of these degenerate days of the Dharma say, those who do not really hear the Teaching and whose body, mind, and eyes are still in the dark.

We who are the living children and potential heirs of the Buddhas and Ancestors must not speak in this manner. Among Masters who abide in, and keep to, the Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors, wild words such as these are never to be heard. Second-rate teachers of recent times, who have never heard the whole

12. That is, before Dōgen had committed himself to being Nyojō's disciple.

13. Shōrin-ji Monastery is associated with Bodhidharma and Mount Sōkei is associated with Daikan Enō.

of what the Buddha Dharma is expressing, who are not totally devoted to what the Ancestors have said, and who are in the dark about their own Original Nature, have given rise to sectarian names like those mentioned earlier out of pride in their small bits of learning. Once these sectarian names became established, those who were young in their training did not learn the proper way to search for the Source and, as a consequence, vainly pursued superficialities. They did not have the spirit that venerates the old ways, but rather engaged in conduct that was mixed with secular customs. However, even the worldly-minded warn people that following worldly ways is ignoble.

Emperor Wen of the Chou dynasty asked his wise minister Taikung, "Why is it that our society is in ever-increasing turmoil, putting the nation in peril? Even though, as a ruler, I endeavor to employ wise counselors, I am not gaining any benefit from them."

Taikung responded, "You may hire the wise, but you will not benefit from them because you have only appeared to have received their sage advice, and therefore you gain nothing from getting their wise counsel."

Emperor Wen then asked, "Wherein does such a fault lie?"

Taikung replied, "The fault lies in being fond of those who are praised by the worldly instead of finding those who are truly sagacious."

Emperor Wen then asked, "What do you mean by having a fondness for those who are praised by the worldly?"

Taikung said, "When people are fond of listening to what the worldly praise, some may take the unwise to be wise; some may take the slow-witted to be intelligent; some may take the disloyal to be loyal; some may take the untrustworthy to be trustworthy. If, on the basis of what the worldly praise, your lordship were to consider someone to be wise and intelligent, or consider someone to be incompetent, then the one who has many henchmen will be advanced, but the one who has few supporters will not. Thus, when a crowd of wicked ones band together and try to conceal the one who is wise, loyal retainers may be put to death on false charges, while false counselors skirmish for prestige and court rank. Thereby, society is in ever-increasing turmoil, and, as a consequence, the nation cannot avoid being put in peril."

Even the worldly grieve when their nation and their customs are in peril. When the Buddha Dharma and the Way of the Buddha are in peril, the disciples of the Buddha will inevitably feel grief. The reason for this peril is the irresponsible following of worldly ways. When people hearken to what is praised by the worldly, they do not find those who are genuinely wise. If you wish to find one who is genuinely wise, you will need to have the resourcefulness that illumines the past and looks forward to what lies ahead. What the worldly praise is not invariably wise, nor is it invariably saintly, and what the worldly slander is likewise not invariably wise, nor is it invariably saintly. Even so, by considering the matter three times over, you may avoid confusing the times when someone who is wise has invited censure with times when someone who is a fraud is being praised. If rulers should fail to make use of the truly wise, it will be a loss for their country, and if they should employ the slow-witted, it will be a source of national regret.

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Now, the arising of the term 'the five sects' is an aberration of the secular world. Those who follow these worldly ways are many, but those who can recognize them as being worldly are few. You should regard those who mistake worldly ways for saintly ways, as well as those who follow them, to have reached the height of folly. How could those folks who follow worldly ways possibly recognize the Buddha's True Teaching? How could they possibly become Buddhas and Ancestors? The Dharma has been Transmitted to heir after heir of the Seven Buddhas. Those folks whose understanding is based merely on words and who speak of 'the five sects' do not realize that five different versions of the *Vinaya* were never established in India.[14]

So, you should recognize that our Ancestral Masters turned the true life of the Buddha's Teaching into their own true life. None of them ever said that there were five sects, each with their own traditions and practices. To learn that there are five Zen sects within the Buddha's Way is not the true inheritance from the Seven Buddhas.

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My late Master once addressed his assembly, saying, "In recent years, the Way of our Ancestral Masters has degenerated. Bands of demons and beasts are many. They often go on about 'the traditions and practices of the five sects'. How

14. The *Vinaya* is a section of the Buddhist canon that contains rules of monastic discipline.

distressing! How truly distressing!" Hence, we know all too well that none of the twenty-eight generations in India or the twenty-two Ancestors in China ever taught about any traditions or customs of five Zen sects. Our Ancestral Masters, who were all worthy of the title of Ancestral Master, have all been the same in this. Those who go about proclaiming that there are five Zen sects, each with its own unique tenets, are folks who are deceiving the public. They are a bunch who have heard little and whose understanding is shallow. If everyone in the Buddha's Way set up his own unique way, how could the Buddha's Way possibly have come down to us today? Makakashō would have set up his own way and Ananda would have set up his. If the principle of setting up one's own way was the authentic Way, the Buddha Dharma would have disappeared in India long ago. Who would honor principles that individual people had set up on their own? If each person sets up his own principles, who could determine which were true and which were false? What was true and what was false could never be determined. If the true and the false cannot be determined, who could recognize what was actually the Buddha Dharma? If its principles cannot be clarified, it would be difficult to call anything 'the Way of the Buddha'. The names of the so-called 'five Zen sects' did not arise during the lifetime of any of the five Ancestral Masters. After those who were called 'the Ancestral Masters of the five Zen sects' had entered nirvana, mediocre trainees within their families, those whose Eye had not yet become clear and whose feet did not know how to step forth, established these names without asking their Master's permission and contrary to the Teaching of the Ancestors. This is so evident that anyone can recognize it.

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Meditation Master Isan Reiyū was a Dharma heir of Hyakujō Daichi. He lived as Abbot on Mount Isan while Hyakujō was still alive. He never said that the Buddha Dharma should be called the Igyō sect.[15] And Hyakujō never said, "From your time onwards, you should dwell on Mount Isan and call your sect the Igyō sect." Neither Master Isan nor his Ancestor Hyakujō ever used such a name, so you need to keep in mind that it is a fraudulent name. And even though people use his name as part of their name for a sect, we should not single out Kyōzan in this way.[16] If it were appropriate for Isan and Kyōzan to have used their own names, they would have used them, but because it is not appropriate to use one's own

15. The name Igyō derives from the first syllable of Isan's name and the first syllable of Kyōzan Ejaku's name. Kyōzan was one of Isan's Dharma heirs.

16. Since Isan had four other Dharma heirs.

name, they did not use their personal names in the past and we should not use them in the present. People do not speak of an Enō sect, or of a Nangaku sect, or of a Baso sect, or of a Hyakujō sect. It is impossible that the Dharma of Isan could differ from that of Enō, or could surpass It, or could ever be a rival to It.

The words that Isan and Kyōzan spoke were undoubtedly not like one pole being carried by two men. If people wanted to establish a name for a sect, they should have called it the Isan sect or the Daii sect, since there is no reason for calling it the Igyō sect. If 'the Igyō sect' were an appropriate name, it would have been called this when the two venerable elders were still alive. What was there to prevent them from using a name that they could have used while they were still alive? To go counter to what their parental Ancestors said and use the name 'the Igyō sect', which neither used while they were alive, is to be children who are devoid of filial piety. This name does not represent the basic intention of Meditation Master Isan or the original purpose of our esteemed teacher Kyōzan. It has not been genuinely Transmitted by an authentic Master. It is clear that it is a fraudulent name used by fraudulent people. Do not let it be spread abroad anywhere in the whole universe.

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After abandoning his position as an academic lecturer on Buddhist Scriptures, Rinzai became a disciple of Ōbaku. On three occasions he tasted Ōbaku's staff, for a total of sixty strokes, and he awoke to his Original Nature whilst exploring the Matter with Daigu.[17] Even though he had not yet fully penetrated Ōbakū's Mind, he took up residence at Rinzai-in Monastery in Chenchou Province. Nevertheless, he never spoke a single sentence to the effect that the Buddha Dharma that had been Transmitted to him should be called the Rinzai sect, nor did he even speak one phrase to that effect, nor did he ever express such a thing by raising a fist or by picking up a ceremonial hossu.* Even so, mediocre trainees within his monastic family failed to preserve their monastic parent's conduct, as well as the Buddha Dharma, and, soon afterwards, mistakenly gave rise to the name 'the Rinzai sect'. If this name had been contrived whilst Great Master Rinzai was still alive, he certainly would have had something to say about the matter, since it is counter to the Teachings of our First Chinese Ancestor.

17. His awakening was aided by Daigu's helping him to realize why Ōbaku had beaten him.

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As Rinzai was dying and was about to pass on the Dharma to Meditation Master Sanshō Enen, he said, "After my departure, do not let my Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching perish."

Enen replied, "My Venerable Monk, how would I dare to let your Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching perish?"

Rinzai then said, "If there were someone who questioned you about It in a peremptory manner, how would you respond?"

Enen immediately gave out with a loud yell that sounded like a donkey's braying.

Rinzai said, "Who would not believe that my Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which I am passing on to this blind jackass, would perish?"

The words spoken by Master and disciple were just like this.[18]

Rinzai never said, "Do not let my Zen sect perish," nor did he say, "Do not let my Rinzai sect perish," nor did he say, "Do not let my sect perish." What he did say, quite simply, was, "Do not let my Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching perish." Be very clear about this, for you should not call the Great Way that is authentically Transmitted by the Ancestors of the Buddha 'the Zen sect' or call it 'the Rinzai sect'. Indeed, you should not even dream of calling It 'the Zen sect'. Even though his term 'letting It perish' refers to that thread which runs through the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, as well as to the way in which It manifests, It is Transmitted in just the way that Rinzai did it. His 'letting It perish' by passing It on to this blind donkey is truly the 'Who knows' of Transmission.[19] In Rinzai's lineage, it was only Enen who received the Transmission in this way. You should not compare him to or equate him with any of his younger or older brothers in the Dharma.[20] Naturally, he was placed near a

18. Rinzai's response is intended ironically and has the effect of adding some light-hearted humor to what was actually a very serious moment. This display of humor is demonstrative of the deep trust that existed between Master and disciple.

19. The phrase 'Who knows' has a double meaning in Zen texts. It can be taken as a question, meaning, "Who can possibly see what is passed on at Transmission?" and it can also be taken as an assertion, meaning "It is 'the Who'—that is, the Buddha Nature—that knows what is Transmitted."

20. Enen was one of Rinzai's seven Dharma heirs. The Rinzai lineage, however, passed on through another of Rinzai's heirs.

bright window.[21] The story of Rinzai and Enen is that of Buddha and Ancestor. Today, a Rinzai Transmission is just as the Vulture Peak Transmission of ancient times. So, the principle is clear that one should not speak of a Rinzai sect.

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Great Master Ummon Bun'en first trained under the venerable elder Chin and may have been one of Ōbakū's offspring. He later became a Dharma heir of Seppō. This Master never said that one should refer to the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching as 'the Ummon sect'. But later, some members of his monastic family, not realizing that the false names 'the Igyō sect' and 'the Rinzai sect' were inappropriate titles, set up the new name of 'the Ummon sect'. If it had been Great Master Ummon's underlying intention to give his name to a sect, it would be difficult to affirm that he possessed the Body and Mind of the Buddha Dharma. When people nowadays give his name to the name of a sect, it is as if they were calling an emperor the lowliest of commoners.

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Meditation Master Hōgen of Seiryō-in Monastery was the authentic Dharma heir of Great Master Jizō Keichin. He was the Dharma grandchild of Gensha Shibi. He grasped the fundamental meaning without any error. Daihōgen was the Master's title bestowed upon him by the emperor and the name that he used for his signature. There is not a single word among his thousands of words, not one sentence among his thousands of sentences, by which he established the title of 'the Hōgen sect' by using his title as a name for the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching.[22] Even so, those in his lineage have given rise to the name 'the Hōgen sect'. If Hōgen were alive today to spiritually lead others, he would not lead them down the path of using the term 'the Hōgen sect'. Since Meditation Master Hōgen has already passed away, there is no one to save us from this sickness. Even after thousands of myriad years, people who would be loyal to Meditation Master Hōgen must not take 'the Hōgen sect' for their name if they wish to remain faithful to his Teaching.

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21. This is said of someone whose spiritual ripeness is so apparent upon his arrival at a monastery that he is given a place in the Trainees' Hall—traditionally described as 'a well-lit place'—where the Master can keep an eye on him.

22. The Hōgen sect is better known by its Chinese name of the Fayen sect.

In summary, both Ummon and Hōgen were distant offspring of our Great Ancestor Seigen. The Bones of the Way were passed on to each of them, along with the Marrow of the Dharma.

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Our Founding Ancestor, Great Master Tōzan Ryōkai, inherited the Dharma from Ungan. Ungan was the direct heir of Great Master Yakusan. Yakusan was the direct heir of Great Master Sekitō. Great Master Sekitō was the sole disciple of our Founding Ancestor Seigen. There were no others who stood head-and-shoulders with Seigen, so the conduct of the Way was authentically Transmitted to him and to him alone. That the true life of the Buddha's Way has still survived in China is due to Great Master Sekitō's having been authentically Transmitted in full.

Our Founding Ancestor Seigen lived at the same time as the Old Buddha Daikan Enō and he trained his disciples on Mount Seigen in the same way as Daikan Enō trained his. In that Master Enō helped Seigen to emerge as an enlightened Abbot within the world and that both of them served as Abbots during the same period of time, Seigen must have been a genuine Dharma heir above other genuine Dharma heirs, a Founding Ancestor among Founding Ancestors. It is not the case that exploring the Matter with one's Master is preferable to functioning as an Abbot. As students of the Way, you should know that a monk who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Daikan Enō during that time would be preeminent today.

On the occasion when the Old Buddha Daikan Enō was giving instruction on how one should enter parinirvana, Sekitō, who was seated in the back row, came forward and asked the Master whom he should depend on once the Master had passed on.[23] The Old Buddha Enō told him to pay a visit to Seigen Gyōshi; he did not tell him to pay a visit to Nangaku Ejō. Thus it is clear that the Old Buddha's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching was authentically Transmitted to our Founding Ancestor Seigen and to him alone.[24] Even though we acknowledge that both Seigen and Nangaku were leading disciples who had realized the Way, only our Founding Ancestor Seigen walked on genuinely spiritual footsteps. The Old Buddha Daikan Enō had thus made his own offspring the offspring of Seigen, who, as the spiritual parent of the great-grandparent of Tōzan, was clearly someone

23. Sekitō was a teenager at the time. His sitting in the back row implies that he was a relatively new novice.

24. Daikan Enō had two preeminent disciples, Seigen and Nangaku. Dōgen's Sōtō lineage comes via Seigen, whereas all other extant lineages come via Nangaku.

who had realized Daikan Enō's Marrow and who was a genuine heir in the Ancestor's lineage.[25]

Great Master Tōzan, as the fourth generation Dharma heir of Seigen, received the genuine Transmission of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which opened his Eye to the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana. There is no separate Transmission, no separate sect, in addition to this. Our Great Master never showed his Fist or his twinkling Eye to his assembly, calling either 'the Sōtō sect'. Further, since there were no mediocre trainees mixed in with his family, how could there possibly be any in his family who spoke of a 'Sōtō sect'!

The name 'Sōtō sect' may have derived from someone adding Sōzan's name to Tōzan's. If this is so, then Ungo and Dōan should also have been included.[26] Ungo was a guiding Master among ordinary people, as well as among those in loftier positions, and was even more revered than Sōzan. When it comes to this name 'Sōtō', clearly some stinking skin bag* in an offshoot lineage who fancied himself the equal of Tōzan devised the name 'Sōtō sect'. Truly, even though the situation is as clear as the sun in broad daylight, it is as if the sun were being obscured by floating clouds.

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My late Master once said, "Nowadays there are many who have ascended a Lion's Seat* and who act as though they were teachers of ordinary people and those in lofty positions. Even so, none of them has an understanding of the underlying principles of the Buddha Dharma." From this perspective, those who are striving to uphold one of the so-called 'five sects' and make the mistake of getting stuck on the words in some Master's saying are truly enemies of the Buddhas and Ancestors. And some, regarding themselves as belonging to a branch of followers of Meditation Master Ōryū Enan, are in the habit of calling themselves 'the Ōryū sect'. Perhaps their branch will not go on very far before they recognize their error. Speaking generally, while the World-honored One was in the world, he never spoke of 'the Buddha sect' or of 'the Vulture Peak sect'. He did not speak of 'the Jetavana sect', or of a 'My Mind sect', or of a 'Buddha Mind sect', so

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25. That is, Sekitō was originally one of Daikan Enō's disciples. Because he was not yet named as a Dharma heir, he became Seigen's disciple and, subsequently, his Dharma heir. In turn, Sekitō became the spiritual parent to Yakusan, who became the spiritual parent of Ungō, who became the spiritual parent of Tōzan.

26. Ungo and Sōzan were both Dharma heirs of Tōzan. Sōzan's line ultimately died out, whereas Ungo's continued on with Dōan as his Dharma heir.

from what words of the Buddha did the name 'Buddha Mind sect' come? Why do people today speak of a 'Buddha Mind sect'? Why would the World-honored One feel the need to call His mind a sect? And why should a sect ever be connected to a mind? If there is to be a Buddha Mind sect, then there ought to be a Buddha Body sect. And we should have a Buddha Eye sect, and a Buddha Ear sect, or even a Buddha Nose and Tongue sect. There would have to be such things as a Buddha's Marrow Sect, a Buddha's Bones sect, a Buddha's Legs sect, or a Buddha Nation sect. No such sects exist at present. Keep in mind that the name 'the Buddha Mind sect' is a phony name.

When Shakyamuni Buddha gave expression to the True Form of all thoughts and things throughout all Buddha lands and when He gave voice to all the Buddha lands throughout the universe, He did not speak of having set up some sect within any of these Buddha lands. If it were the practice of Buddhas and Ancestors to name sects, it would have been done in one of the Buddha lands, and if these names existed in one of the Buddha lands, it would have been something that a Buddha would have spoken of. The Buddha did not speak of it, so you should know for certain that it did not exist in the Buddha lands. It is not practiced in the Way of the Ancestors, so you should know for certain that it is not something that the Ancestors found useful. It is not only something that other people would laugh at, but it is also something that would be held in check by Buddhas. Therefore, it is something that you yourselves should laugh at. So, I beg you, do not create sectarian names, and do not say that there are five sects within the Buddha Dharma.

In more recent times, there was a childlike person named Chisō who collected a small spattering of sayings of Ancestral Masters along with what he called 'the sectarian lineages of the five families'. He named his work the *Eyes of Human and Celestial Beings*. People have not understood what this work really is. Bunches of novices and present-day trainees have fancied that it is accurate, and some of them even go about carrying a copy of it tucked within their robes. This work is not the eyes of human and celestial beings, but rather something that blinds the eyes of human and celestial beings. How could anyone possibly accrue any merit by disregarding the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching?

This *Eyes of Human and Celestial Beings* was compiled and edited by a senior monk named Chisō in Mannen Temple on Mount Tendai around the twelfth lunar month in the sixth year of the Shunhsi era (1188). Even though it was compiled in more recent times, if its statements were accurate we could approve of it. But this work of his is utter madness and blind folly, for he lacked the Eye for

exploring the Matter, nor did he have the Eye of one who has journeyed far in search of a Master, to say nothing of having the Eye for recognizing Buddhas and Ancestors! We should not use this work. He shouldn't have been called Chisō, which means 'He Who is Wise and Knowing', but Gumō, which means 'He Who is Blinded by Ignorance'. He is someone who does not know what 'such a person'* means and who has never met 'such a person', and, because of this, he has arbitrarily compiled sayings without picking out just the sayings of those who are 'such a person'. It is obvious that he does not know what 'such a person' is.

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The reason why those folks who study Scriptures in China assign sectarian names to them is because they wish to compare the opinions of the various teachers of this and that. Now, the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors has been Transmitted from Dharma heir to Dharma heir. These heirs are incomparable, for they have no 'this or that' which can confuse others. Be that as it may, there are some trainees of long standing who are inaccurate and who employ sectarian names to no purpose. Because they are engaged in the hot pursuit of personal gain, they do not stand in proper awe of the Buddha's Way.

The Buddha's Way is not someone's personal 'Buddha's Way'. It is the Buddha's Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors. It is the Buddha's Way of the Buddha's Way. As Minister Taikung once said when talking with Emperor Wen, "The whole nation is not the nation of one person. It is the whole nation's whole nation." Thus, even an ordinary layman had wisely discerned this and had put it this way.

As children of the Buddhas and Ancestors, you must not permit those within the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors to recklessly follow along with the foolish and the blind by setting up sects and giving them personal names. That is a great impropriety, and one who acts like this is not a person of the Buddha's Way. If it was right for us to go around naming sects, the World-honored One would have done so Himself. In that the World-honored One had not already given His name to a sect, why should His children use such names after His parinirvana? Who could be more spiritually skillful than the World-honored One? If someone lacks skill, no good can come of it. Again, if the Buddhas and the Ancestors have not acted contrary to the Way in the past by setting up sects in Their own names, who of His children would name a sect after themselves?

You need to explore the Matter through your training by studying the past and examining the present, and do not be arbitrary about it. When Shakyamuni

Buddha was in the world, His disciples were apprehensive lest they should differ from Him by even a hair, or lest they should miss even one jot within the hundreds of thousands of myriad points of His Teaching, for they wished to experience the joy of realizing the Truth which they had chosen as their inheritance, and they would not go against It. Thus, we should vow to seek and serve the Buddha and hear His Dharma over the course of many lives. Those who would deliberately go against the transforming Teaching that the World-honored One gave while He was in the world and give rise to sectarian names are not disciples of the Tathagata nor are they offspring of the Ancestral Masters. Their breaking of Precepts is more serious than the transgressions of others. They have rashly disregarded the importance of the unsurpassed wisdom of the Tathagata, and, by selfishly fostering their own sect, they have made light of or disregarded those who preceded them to such an extent that we can say they do not even know who their predecessors were. They did not trust in the meritorious behavior of the World-honored One during His time. The Buddha Dharma cannot exist within the dwelling places of such people.

So, if you wish to receive the authentic Transmission of the conduct of the Way, you must not look for or hearken to sectarian names. That which Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor has received and authentically Transmitted is the unsurpassed wisdom of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. The Dharma that is possessed by the Buddhas and Ancestors has been wholly Transmitted by the Buddhas and Ancestors, and there is nothing new to be added to the Dharma. This principle is the very Bones of the Dharma and the very Marrow of the Way.

Given to the assembly at Kippō-ji Temple in the Yoshida district of Fukui Prefecture on the sixteenth day of the ninth lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (October 30, 1243).

Copied by me during the third watch of the night on the twenty-third day of the tenth lunar month in the same year (November 6, 1243).

Ejō

52

On the Heart-to-Heart Language of Intimacy

(Mitsugo)

Translator's Introduction: The term *'mitsugo'* has a variety of meanings which come into play throughout this discourse. In its conventional, mundane sense, it refers to using a secret language. That is, someone is using language to conceal something, to hide its meaning from the uninitiated. It also refers to some unique or personal way in which a Buddha or Ancestor puts the Great Matter, a way that has a sense of immediacy in contrast to something discursive. And it refers to the way that Master and disciple communicate, which has inherent in it an element of intimacy or closeness that arises from their being of one Mind and of one Heart.

When your spiritual question fully breaks open and manifests the Great Truth that all Buddhas preserve within Their hearts, the sayings "You too are like this and I too am like this" and "We must guard well" express this awakening to Shakyamuni's prediction of Buddhahood.

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One time when Great Master Ungo Dōyō was being offered alms by a high government official, he was asked, "They say that the World-honored One had a secret way of communicating and that Makakashō did not conceal it. What was the World-honored One's secret way of communicating?"

The Great Master called out to him, "O Minister!"

The man acknowledged the call with a "Yes?"

The Great Master said, "Do you get It?"

The official replied, "No, I don't get it."

The Great Master then said, "Were you not to get It, it would be because it is the World-honored One's 'secret' way of putting It. If you were to get It, it would be because Makakashō did not keep It to himself."

The Great Master was making fully apparent that he was a fifth-generation descendant of Seigen and a teacher of those in lofty positions, as well as of ordinary people, and that he was an excellent spiritual friend to those throughout the whole universe in all ten directions, who gave guidance to both the sentient and

the nonsentient.[1] As the Forty-sixth Buddha among the Buddha's heirs, he voiced the Dharma for the sake of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Whilst residing in his hermitage on Three-peak Mountain, he was sent food from celestial kitchens as alms. At the time when the Dharma was transmitted to him and he realized the Truth, he transcended the realm of being sent such alms.[2]

What is quoted here now as "The World-honored One had a secret way of putting It and Makakashō did not conceal It" is what the Forty-sixth Buddha passed on to us as the Original Face of forty-six generations. It is not a matter of chasing after someone who has realized It, nor is It something that comes from outside oneself, nor is It something that Makakashō and he alone was originally endowed with, nor has It ever been some prize newly awarded to someone. It is the manifesting of an intimate and personal way of putting It; it is not a matter of the World-honored Shakyamuni having some secret language of His own. All Buddhas and Ancestors have Their own intimate way of putting It. Whoever has already become a World-honored One, without doubt, has an intimate way of putting It. And when someone has an intimate way of putting It, there is no doubt that there will be a Makakashō who will not conceal It. We must not forget to explore through our training the principle that when there are a hundred thousand World-honored Ones, there will be a hundred thousand Makakashō's. 'Exploring through our training' means not intentionally trying to understand everything all at once, but taking great pains in striving a hundred or even a thousand times, as if you were trying to cut through something hard. Do not fancy that when someone has something to relate to you, you should immediately understand what is being said.

In that he of Mount Ungō had already become a World-honored One, he was equipped with an intimate and personal way of putting It and he had Makakashō's way of not concealing It. In your explorations, do not pursue the idea that the calling out of "O Minister!" and the Minister's replying "Yes?" are some secret way of communicating.

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1. The sentient are those who are sensitive to the Dharma and the nonsentient are those who have not yet learned how to listen to It.

2. While someone is seriously pursuing the path to enlightenment, that person receives celestial sustenance, and when someone realizes the Truth, the offering of celestial sustenance ceases, since there is no longer any need for it.

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In the narrative, the Great Master pointed out the Matter* to the high government official, saying, "Were you not to get It, it would be because it is the World-honored One's 'secret' way of putting It. If you were to get It, it would be because Makakashō did not keep It to himself." You should be determined to do your utmost for as many eons as it takes to pursue what is being said here. What he is saying is, "When you are in a state of not getting It, that is the World-honored One's intimate way of putting It." He is not saying that not getting It was due to the official's being dull-headed. This was his way of giving his support for the official to really listen to what is going on by calmly exploring the principle of 'were you not to get It'. The official needed to do his utmost in pursuing the Way. Also, his saying, "If you were to get It," goes beyond saying, "You have already comprehended it." [3]

There are many different ways to go in exploring the Buddha Dharma through one's training. Among them lies the essential matter of grasping what the Buddha Dharma is or of not grasping what the Buddha Dharma is. Those who have not yet encountered an authentic Master do not even know that such an essential matter exists. In wild confusion, they misunderstand, thinking that there is some kind of secret language, and thereby they recklessly shut off their eyes and ears from seeing and hearing. This goes beyond saying that your understanding is the condition upon which Its 'not being concealed' is based, for It is still not concealed even when you do not understand It. Do not pursue through your training that not concealing It means that anybody can see or hear It. It is already in plain view right here and now. And when can we say for certain that nothing is hidden? At this very moment, we need to try to make a thorough examination of this point, since we are not to explore through our training that matters which are unknown to us are what is meant by 'intimate ways of putting It'. The very moment of not understanding the Buddha Dharma is one part of an intimate way of putting It. That part is what invariably belongs to the World-honored One; it is the World-honored One's existence.

Even so, people who have not heard the instructive teaching of a genuine Master may take to sitting upon the Buddha's Lion Seat,* but they have not yet

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* See *Glossary*.

3. That is, grasping the significance of what the Great Master is pointing to goes far beyond having a purely intellectual or speculative understanding.

encountered this underlying principle even in their dreams. They arbitrarily say such things as the following:

> The statement, "The World-honored One had a secret way of communicating," refers to His raising up a flower, His eyes atwinkle, whilst He stood before an assembly of hundreds of thousands upon Vulture Peak. And He did so because the words used in the Buddha's preaching are superficial, being concerned only with names and forms, whereas giving expression to It without recourse to words by His holding aloft a flower and twinkling His eyes is the occasion which established this secret way of communicating. The hundreds of thousands in the assembly did not comprehend this, because this was His secret way of communicating for the sake of that assembly. The statement, "Makakashō did not conceal It," refers to Makakashō's face breaking into a smile as if he already knew that the World-honored One would raise the flower and His eyes would twinkle. This is the true secret key to practicing the Way, and it is what has been passed on in case after case.

The folks who, hearing this, think it to be true are as common as rice and hemp seeds, bamboo canes and reeds. They are the sort of folks who populate monasteries in all nine divisions of China. How sad that this way of thinking has sent the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors into a decline! Someone whose eyes are bright and clear can surely get to the bottom of what is really going on here, point by point.

If the words the World-honored One used were really something superficial, then His holding the flower aloft, with His eyes atwinkle, would also be something superficial. Were anyone to consider what He said to be merely name and form, that person is not 'such a one'* who has learned what the Buddha Dharma really is. Those who consider what is spoken to be no more than names and forms have not yet comprehended that the World-honored One was beyond the use of language as merely 'names and forms'. They have not yet let go of the confused, emotional attitudes of ordinary, worldly people. What permeates the Body and Mind of Buddhas and Ancestors is the dropping off of self, Their giving expression to the Dharma, and Their using language to voice It, that is, Their turning the Wheel of the Dharma. There have been many indeed who, having witnessed and listened to It, have greatly profited from It. Those whose practice is based on faith, as well as those whose practice is based on understanding the Teaching, are cloaked in Its influence in places where there is an Ancestor of the Buddha, or partake of Its influence even in places where there is no Ancestor of the Buddha. How could any

of the hundreds of thousands in that assembly possibly fail to have witnessed that His holding the flower aloft, His eyes atwinkle, was a holding aloft of a Flower, with His Eye atwinkle? Anyone in the assembly might have been shoulder-to-shoulder with Makakashō, or might have been living in the same way as the World-honored One. And anyone in the assembly might have been exploring the Matter in the same way as hundreds of thousands of others in the assembly were doing, or might, at the same time, have been giving rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood, for they were walking the same spiritual path in the same country. By relying on the wise discernment gained from direct experience, they may see the Buddha and hear His Teaching, or by relying on the wisdom gained from not knowing, they may see the Buddha and hear His Teaching. After having encountered a Buddha for the first time, one will subsequently recognize Buddhas as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges. In any particular assembly of a Buddha, there may be people numbering in the hundreds of thousands of millions, and we may see each Buddha in all the assemblies holding aloft the Flower, Eye atwinkle, at the same time. No observing eye is dim; every listening ear is keen. And there is the Eye of the Heart, and there are the eyes of the body. There is the Ear of the Heart, and there are the ears of the body.

How does that other bunch understand 'Makakashō's face breaking into a smile'? Let them try to put <u>that</u> into words. If it were as those folks say, they would have called that smile 'a secret communication'. But to call it 'his not concealing anything' would be piling foolishness atop foolishness. Later, the World-honored One said, "I have the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, and I have transmitted It to Makakashō." Is His speaking in this way using speech or not using speech? If the World-honored One had a dislike for spoken language and preferred holding a flower aloft, He surely would have also held up a flower on this occasion. And then, how could Makakashō fail to understand and how could the assembly fail to hear? Do not rely on the tales of those folks who talk this way.

To summarize, the World-honored One had His own way of talking, His own way of acting, and His own way of awakening to the Truth. Foolish people fancy that having one's own way of putting the Matter—that is, His having a 'secret' way—means that other people did not know what He Himself knew. Hence, there were those who were 'in on it' and those who were not 'in on it'. Those who had been voicing their opinions about a 'secret way' in India or the eastern lands from remote antiquity to the present day have not explored the Buddha's Way through their training. Among the uneducated in both secular life and in those who left secular life behind, secrets were many, whereas, among the educated, secrets have

been few indeed. How could those of broad experience possibly have secrets? And how much less can there be secret talk or secret intentions when one is wholly equipped with sharp eyes and sharp ears, or with the Eye of wisdom and the Ear of wisdom, or with a Buddha's Eye and a Buddha's Ear? Associating such things as a secret language, secret intentions, or secret actions with the Buddha's Teaching is not in accord with this principle. When we encounter 'such a person', of course we hear his way of putting It, and we express our way of putting It. When we know our True Self, we know what another's way of demonstrating It is pointing to. Moreover, an Ancestor of the Buddha is capable of understanding the previously mentioned 'secret' intentions and 'secret' language. Keep in mind that, at the very moment of being an Ancestor of the Buddha, secret ways of saying It and secret ways of enacting It vie with each other to manifest. What we mean by 'secret' is the principle of intimacy, of closeness. It means that there is no gap. It embraces Buddha and Ancestor. It embraces you and it embraces me. It embraces our practice. It embraces those of our generation. It embraces our meritorious deeds. It embraces what is most intimate. Even when the Eye of a Buddha espies 'such a person' encountering intimate talk and intimate talk encountering 'such a person', He may not see it, even though He may try. The practice of intimacy is beyond anything known by self or other. Only the Intimate Self can know it, for it is beyond the ken of any other intimate person. Because Intimacy resides all around you, everything relies on Intimacy; each thing or even half a thing relies on Intimacy. You need to explore this principle, doing your utmost to clarify what it is.

In conclusion, whenever and wherever we are practicing the Way, it invariably involves an intimate way of expressing the Matter for the benefit of 'such a one'. This is the legitimate succession of Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor. Because this very moment of Now is such an occasion, we are intimate with our self, with the self of others, with the Buddhas and Ancestors, and with all the different species. As a result, it is an intimacy atop intimacy, ever anew. Because such Teaching, practice, and awakening are what a Buddha or Ancestor is, they comprise what Buddhas and Ancestors intimately pass on.

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My Master's Master, Setchō, once said to his assembly in verse:

The World-honored One had an intimate way of speaking,
Which Makakashō could not conceal,
For in the night, flowers had rained down,
Bathing the citadel in their perfume.

Here and now, Setchō's expression, "For in the night, flowers had rained down, bathing the citadel in their perfume," is the very essence of what Intimacy is. Because Setchō proclaimed this, you should scrutinize the Eye and Nose of our Buddhist Ancestor. It was a place that neither Rinzai nor Tokusan were able to reach. You need to open up and explore the Nostrils that are in your Eye, and let the tip of your Nose sharpen up your Ear. And what is more, you need not go all that deeply into your Ear, Nose, or Eye to make Them your whole body and mind, and without making Them over again. We take this as the principle of "the raining down of flowers gives rise to the world."[4]

Setchō's expression, "Bathing the citadel in their perfume," is synonymous with the True Self being concealed while the outer form becomes ever more like a hermit training in his hut. Therefore, thoroughly explore and pass on to others that within the everyday life of the family of the Buddhas and Ancestors, the World-honored One will have His intimate words and Makakashō will not conceal them from us. Each of the Seven World-honored Buddhas,* in turn, explored the Matter through Their training just as you do now. Makakashō and Shakyamuni likewise probed deeply into the Matter so that They might understand It. I pray that you are now doing the same.

Given to the assembly on the twentieth day of the ninth lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (November 3, 1243) at the old monastery of Kippō-ji in the Yoshida district of Echizen Province.

Copied while staying in the office of the Abbot of the same monastery on the sixteenth day of the tenth lunar month in the same year (November 29, 1243).

Ejō

4. This quote is a line from a poem by Bodhidharma's Master, the Venerable Hannyatara. Dōgen modified it slightly to fit in the context of his discourse by substituting the words 'raining down of flowers' for Hannyatara's 'opening of a blossom'.

53

On the True Nature of All Things

(Hosshō)

Translator's Introduction: 'The True Nature of all things' (*hosshō*) refers not only to the way things are just as they are, but also to our Buddha Nature and to That Which Is.

If you are really doing your exploring through your training, whether by following the Scriptures or by following your spiritual friend, you will ultimately realize the Truth by yourself, independent of your Master. Realizing the Truth by oneself independent of one's Master is the functioning of one's True Nature. And even so, if you are inherently keen, you will still need to call upon a Master and inquire of the Way. And even if you are not inherently keen, you will still need to do your utmost in practicing the Way. But who among you is not inherently keen? Each one of you follows both the Scriptures and the advice of a good friend in order to arrive at the enlightenment which is the fruit of Buddhahood. Keep in mind that inherent keenness means that when you encounter the Scriptures or come face-to-face with a spiritual friend, you are encountering the meditative state of your True Nature, and that when you encounter the meditative state of your True Nature, you attain the meditative state of the True Nature of all things.[1] It is our tapping into the wisdom from our previous lives, attaining the three illuminations, and awakening to fully perfected enlightenment.[2] Coming face-to-face with our inherent keenness, we study it; coming face-to-face with the wisdom that goes beyond having a Master and that is inherent within us, we straightforwardly Transmit it. If we had no inherent keenness, then even though we came face-to-face with the Scriptures and a spiritual friend, we could not hear what the True Nature of all things is, nor could we realize It. The Great Truth is not a principle

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1. The 'meditative state of one's True Nature' refers to entering the realm where we can see the True Nature of all things.

2. The three illuminations are seeing what conditions result from the past lives of oneself and others, seeing what conditions are likely to arise for oneself and others in future times, and seeing what the miseries of present life conditions are in oneself and others, along with how to remove their root causes.

like that of someone drinking water to know for himself whether it is warm or cool.[3]

All Buddhas, along with all Bodhisattvas* and all sentient beings, by the power of their inherent keenness, clarify what the Great Truth of the True Nature of all things is. They clarify what the Great Truth of this True Nature is by following the Scriptures and by following their spiritual friend. In this way, they come to understand their own True Nature. The Scriptures are what True Nature is: they are our true Self. And because True Nature is our true Self, It is not the self that non-Buddhists and devilish beings misunderstand It to be. Within True Nature there is no 'non-Buddhist' or 'devilish being'; it is simply a matter of "Come to breakfast! Come to dinner! Come to supper!"[4] Even so, when those who call themselves long-time trainees of twenty or thirty years encounter talk about the True Nature of all things, they stagger on through their lives in a daze. Styling themselves as being both long-disciplined and enlightened, they climb up upon a Master's wooden Dharma seat. Then, when they hear the Voice of their True Nature, or catch sight of the Form of their True Nature, their body and mind, and everything around them, simply bob up and down in a pit of confusion. In this unpleasant state of affairs, they mistakenly imagine that after the universe has fallen away, the True Nature will appear, and that this True Nature will no longer be comprised of the myriad forms that exist in the world. The principle of the True Nature of all things can never be like that. The myriad forms of all that exists in the world and the True Nature of all things lie far beyond discussions of being the same or being different, and they transcend any talk of being separate or being united. Because they are beyond past, present, and future, beyond being discontinuous or continuous, beyond physical form, sensation, thoughts, actions, and consciousness, they are what the True Nature of all things is.

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Meditation Master Baso Dōitsu from Chiang-hsi in Hungchou Province once said:

> All sentient beings from countless eons past have never departed from the meditative state of the True Nature of all things, but

3. That is, the Great Truth is absolute, whereas the testing of the temperature of water through direct experience is relative.

* See *Glossary*.

4. That is, all beings are invited, for they are already included within this True Nature.

> rather they have always resided within It. Putting on clothes and eating meals, conversing and making respectful replies, using one's six sense organs: all such activities are totally what True Nature is.

The True Nature of all things that Baso spoke of is the True Nature expressed by True Nature. It harmonized with Baso and he harmonized with It. Once he had heard It, how could he have failed to speak out? The True Nature of all things rode astride Baso.[5]

Now, people absorb meals and meals absorb people. The True Nature of both of these, from the start, has never left the meditative state of the True Nature of all things. Their True Nature, after manifesting Itself, has never left the True Nature of all things. Their True Nature, before manifesting Itself, has never left the True Nature of all things. The True Nature of all things over countless eons of time is simply the meditative state of the True Nature of all things. So we describe this True Nature as being eons beyond measure. Accordingly, whatever is here at this very moment is the True Nature of all things, and the True Nature of all things is what exists at this very moment. When we put on our clothes and eat our meal, it is the meditative state of the True Nature of all things that is putting on the clothes and eating the meal. The True Nature of clothing is fully manifested; the True Nature of food is fully manifested. The True Nature of eating is fully manifested; the True Nature of dressing is fully manifested. If we did not put on clothes and eat food, if we did not converse and make respectful replies, if we did not use our six sense organs, if we were not performing all our actions, then we would not be in the meditative state of the True Nature of all things, nor would we have entered into our own True Nature. What was just quoted here and now from Baso is what the Buddhas fully conferred to Shakyamuni Buddha, and it is what the Ancestors have accurately Transmitted to Baso. Authentically Transmitted and handed on by Buddha after Buddha and by Ancestor after Ancestor, It was authentically Transmitted through the meditative state of the True Nature of all things. Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor, without having to enter this meditative state, have set Their True Nature frolicking like a fish leaping about in the water. Even though teachers of doctrine who rely on the written word speak of 'true nature', it is not the True Nature of which Baso spoke. Now, there may be some merit in human beings, who have never yet departed from their True Nature, thinking that they must certainly be devoid of a True Nature, but this will just be a

5. There is a play on words here. Baso's name literally means 'our Ancestor who is a horse', the horse being a common Zen metaphor for someone who goes traveling near and far to help all sentient beings.

fresh instance of their True Nature manifesting Itself. Even were we to talk or converse as if we lacked True Nature, or were to work or act as if we lacked True Nature, this too would only be True Nature manifesting Itself.

The passing of days and months of immeasurable eons past has been the passing of the True Nature of all things. And it is just the same for the present and the future.

We may take the measure of our body and mind to be just the measure of our body and mind, not recognizing them as an aspect of our True Nature, but this way of thinking about them is also a function of our True Nature. Or we may take the measure of our body and mind not to be a true measure of our body and mind, while still not recognizing them as an aspect of our True Nature, but this way of thinking about them is likewise a function of our True Nature. Whatever we may consider or not consider them to be, in either case they are an aspect of our True Nature. To think that the 'Nature' in 'True Nature' means that water does not flow and that trees do not flourish and then wither away is a non-Buddhist view.[6]

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Shakyamuni Buddha once said, "The appearance of each thought and thing is just as it is, and the nature of each thought and thing is likewise just as it is." Accordingly, flowers blooming and leaves falling are just True Nature as it is. Even so, foolish people fancy that within the realm of True Nature flowers do not bloom and leaves do not fall. Right now, without questioning anyone else, articulate your own doubts by forming a concept or image of them. Go over them thoroughly three times as if they were being expounded by someone else, and chances are that you will have already extricated yourself from them. It is not that these doubts are wicked thoughts, but they are simply thoughts arising at a time before you have clarified your doubts. When you are clarifying your doubts, do not think that you need to get rid of them. The blooming of flowers and the falling of leaves are, quite naturally, the blooming of flowers and the falling of leaves. The thinking which gives rise to the idea that there can be no blooming flowers or falling leaves within True Nature is True Nature Itself. True Nature manifests Itself when our thinking is freed from concepts or images, and is therefore in accord with the way that True Nature 'thinks'. The totality of Its thinking resembles a contemplation on the True Nature of all things.

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6. That is, it is non-Buddhist to think that because something has True Nature, it is absolutely unchanging.

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Baso's phrase, 'totally what this True Nature is,' is truly eighty or ninety percent of expressing the Matter.*[7] And yet there are many things that Baso did not expound. He did not say that all true natures never depart from their True Nature. Nor did he say that all True Natures are totally what True Nature is. Nor did he say that no True Nature ever departs from being a sentient being. Nor did he say that the True Nature of all sentient beings is but a small bit of the True Nature of all things. Nor did he say that all sentient beings comprise the whole of the True Nature of all things. Nor did he say that the totality of True Nature is just a small bit of a sentient being. Nor did he say that half of a sentient being is half of someone's True Nature. Nor did he say that the absence of sentient beings is what the True Nature of all things is. Nor did he say that True Nature is not a sentient being. Nor did he say that the True Nature of all things frees Itself from 'being True Nature'. Nor did he say that sentient beings drop off 'being a sentient being'. He simply said that sentient beings do not depart from the meditative state of the True Nature of all things. He did not say that this True Nature cannot depart from the meditative state of sentient beings. Nor did he assert that the meditative state of True Nature departs from or enters the meditative state of sentient beings. Much less can we hear him say that the True Nature of all things is synonymous with realizing Buddhahood, or that sentient beings' awakening to their True Nature is their True Nature's awakening to True Nature. Nowhere does he assert that non-sentient beings do not depart from the True Nature of all things.

At this moment I would like to ask Baso, "What is it that you call 'sentient beings'? If what you call 'True Nature' refers to 'sentient beings', then It is That Which Comes in This Way. If what you call 'sentient beings' refers to beings that are sentient, then what you say resembles Nangaku Ejō's saying, "Were I to put It in words, they would not hit the bull's-eye." So, YOU! NOW! SAY WHAT IT IS! RIGHT RIGHT NOW!

Given to the assembly at the beginning of winter in the first year of the Kangen era (November 14, 1243) at Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province.

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7. In Zen, to say that someone is expressing eighty or ninety percent of the Matter is a complimentary way of saying that someone has had a full realization that goes beyond anyone's ability to completely express.

54

On the Dharma That Nonsentient Beings Express

(Mujō Seppō)

Translator's Introduction: As Dōgen's discourse makes clear, he understands 'sentient' and 'nonsentient' in a specific way. Sentient beings are those who are still wedded to their senses, which give rise to the duality of self and other, that is, they are those who are ordinary, worldly human beings. 'Nonsentient beings' refers to whatever exists just as it is, which includes not only such things in nature as trees, rivers, mountains, and stones, but also those beings who have dropped off the false self, who have escaped from the tyranny of their greeds, hatreds, and delusions, and who have freed themselves from slavery to their senses; that is, they have become 'such a person'.

Expressing the Dharma within the Dharma's ever-present expression is the manifest spiritual conundrum that Ancestors of the Buddha entrust to Ancestors of the Buddha. This expressing of the Dharma is the Dharma expressing Itself. It is beyond being sentient or nonsentient. It is beyond something intentional, beyond something unintentional, and beyond karmic* causes producing something intentional or unintentional. And it is beyond the methods of those who pursue causal conditions. Even so, it does not travel in the paths of birds.[1] When the Great Way is fully realized, the expressing of the Dharma is fully realized. And when the Treasure House of the Dharma is entrusted to an heir, the expressing of the Dharma is entrusted to that person as well. When the flower was held aloft, an expressing of the Dharma was held aloft.[2] And when the kesa* was Transmitted, an expressing of the Dharma was Transmitted. This is why, since before the time of the Lords of Awe-inspiring Voices, Buddhas and Ancestors alike have paid homage to the expressing of the Dharma, and, since before the time of the Buddhas, They have customarily made expressing the Dharma Their fundamental practice. Do not

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* See *Glossary.*

1. That is, unlike birds in flight, the Dharma leaves traces.

2. This refers to the Transmission of the Dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha to His disciple Makakashō. This occurred when the Buddha held a flower aloft and Makakashō, recognizing its significance, smiled in response.

explore through your training that expressing the Dharma is something that the Buddhas and Ancestors have customarily regulated, for it is They who have been regulated by the expressing of the Dharma. This expressing of the Dharma is not limited to the expounding of the eighty-four thousand gates that make up the whole of the Dharma; there are immeasurable, limitless gates that make up the whole of the expressions of the Dharma. So, do not explore through your training that expressions of Dharma by former Buddhas are what constitute expressions of Dharma by later Buddhas. Just as former Buddhas do not return to be later Buddhas, so it is with expressing the Dharma. The ways of expressing It that were used in the past are not the ways by which It is expressed later on. This is why Shakyamuni Buddha said, "In the same manner that any Buddha of past, present, or future expressed the Dharma, I too, likewise, give voice to a Dharma that is in no way separate from Theirs."

Thus, just as They made use of the expressions of Dharma of other Buddhas, so He made use of the expressions of Dharma of those other Buddhas. And just as He authentically Transmitted the expressing of Dharma, so those Buddhas authentically Transmitted the expressing of Dharma. There is the authentic Transmitting from my late Master back to the Seven Buddhas,* and there is the authentic Transmitting from the Seven Buddhas down to the present—and there is the Dharma that nonsentient beings express. And within this Dharma that nonsentient beings express there are Buddhas and there are Ancestors. Do not fix in your mind that the saying, "I am now expressing the Dharma," is something new that is not part of the authentic Transmission. And do not use it in an attempt to substantiate that the true Transmission of past and present is just an old nesting place in some demon's cave.[3]

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National Teacher Echū of Kōtaku-ji Temple in the Western Capital of Great T'ang China was once asked by a monk, "Do even nonsentient beings voice the Dharma?"

The National Teacher replied, "They are always expressing It with ardor, and there is no interruption in their voicing of It."

The monk said, "Why then do I not hear It?"

The National Teacher replied, "Though you yourself do not hear It, that won't stand in the way of others hearing It."

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3. An 'old nesting place' refers to habitual ways of thinking that are no longer valid. 'Some demon's cave' is a synonym for delusion.

The monk asked, "I'm still unclear. What kind of people could possibly hear It?"

The National Teacher said, "Saintly ones can hear It."

The monk then asked, "Venerable Monk, do you also hear It?"

The National Teacher answered, "I do not hear It."

The monk then asked, "Since you, Venerable Monk, do not hear It, how do you know that nonsentient beings voice the Dharma?"

The National Teacher replied, "Fortunately for you, I do not hear It. If I heard It, I would be on the level of the saints, and then you could not hear my voicing of the Dharma."

The monk then said, "If that is the case, then sentient beings play no part in the Dharma."

The National Teacher responded, "I express the Dharma for the sake of sentient beings, but I do not express It for the sake of saints."

The monk then asked, "What are sentient beings like after they hear It?"

The National Teacher answered, "They are beyond being 'sentient beings.'"

Novices, as well as those long in the practice, who may be exploring through their training what the statement "The nonsentient give expression to the Dharma" means, should straightaway be diligent in their study of this story of the National Teacher. "They are always expressing It with ardor, and there is no interruption in their voicing of It" is how he put it. 'Always' is one instant of time within all times. "There is no interruption in their voicing of It" implies that expressing It is already coming forth, and without interruption.

Do not explore the matter of 'the nonsentient' giving expression to the Dharma as if it were necessarily like that of sentient beings who are making vocal sounds to express the Dharma. To take voicings in the realm of sentient beings out of their context and then liken them to voicings in the realm of the nonsentient is not the Way of the Buddha. When the nonsentient give expression to the Dharma, it may not necessarily be with audible sounds, just as, for instance, a sentient being's giving expression to the Dharma may not involve audible sounds.

For the time being, you should diligently explore this through your training by asking yourself and others, "Just what is a sentient being? Just what is a nonsentient being?" Accordingly, you should pay the utmost attention to details in order to explore through your training just what this matter of nonsentient beings expressing the Dharma is about. According to the opinions of foolish people, the rustling of trees in the forest, the opening of flowers, and the falling of leaves are

believed to be nonsentient things expressing the Dharma, but such people are not persons who have learned what the Buddha taught. If it were so, then who could not hear the Dharma that is expressed by the nonsentient? For the moment, you should reflect on whether or not there are grasses and trees and forests in the realm of the nonsentient, and whether or not the realm of the nonsentient is intersecting, or mingling with, that of the sentient. At the same time, to take such things as grasses and trees or tiles and stones to be nonsentient is to be less than fully educated. And to believe that being nonsentient means being grass and trees or tiles and stones is to tire of exploring the Matter.* Even if you were to believe that human beings view such things as grass and trees to be patterned after the nonsentient, such things as grass and trees are not something that the mental efforts of ordinary, worldly people actually take measure of. And the reason for this is that there are great differences between the celestial forests of those in lofty positions and the forests of ordinary human beings, and that what is produced in China is not equivalent to what is produced in its bordering lands, and that the vegetation which grows in the oceans and that which grows amidst the mountains are not the same. And what is more, there are forests that grow in the open sky and forests that grow in the clouds. And there are hundreds of grasses and thousands of trees that sprout up in wind and fire. In sum, there are those things that need to be explored as being sentient and there are those things that need to be explored as being nonsentient. And there are grasses and trees that resemble humans and animals when the differences between the sentient and the nonsentient have not yet been made clear. And what is more, when we see a Taoist mountain hermit's trees and rocks, flowers and fruits, and hot and cool springs with our own eyes, they are beyond doubting, but explaining them is difficult indeed! Having barely even seen the grasses and trees from a great country like China and observing only the grasses and trees of a small, single nation like Japan, do not imagine that they must be like those found throughout the whole universe.

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The National Teacher said, "Saintly ones can hear It."

That is to say, in the assembly where a nonsentient one expresses the Dharma, all saintly ones stand up to listen. The saintly ones and the nonsentient ones bring about listening and they bring about expressing.[4] The nonsentient one is already

4. That is, their response encourages others in the assembly to listen, and their attention to what they are hearing encourages the one who is speaking to give voice to the Dharma.

expressing the Dharma for the sake of the saintly ones, but is It put in a saintly way or in an ordinary, everyday way? In other words, when you have completely clarified the manner in which the nonsentient express the Dharma, you will realize that what you hear is no different from what the saintly hear. When you have been able to realize this, you will clearly understand the realm of a saintly one. In addition, you should continue to explore through your training the daily conduct that traverses the path through the heavens, transcending both the mundane and the saintly.

The National Teacher said, "I do not hear It."

Do not presume that these words are easy to understand. Does he not hear It because he has gone beyond the mundane and transcended the saintly? Or does he not hear It because he has torn asunder the old nest of 'the worldly versus the saintly'? By your making a diligent effort, you can realize what he is saying.

The National Teacher said, "Fortunately for you, I do not hear It. If I heard It, I would be on the level of the saints."

This statement is beyond being the best way of putting it and beyond being just another way of putting it. His saying "Fortunately for you, I…" is beyond the mundane and the saintly. Might his "Fortunately for you, I…" be that of an Ancestor of the Buddha? Because an Ancestor of the Buddha is beyond the mundane and has transcended the saintly, what he hears may not be the same as what the saintly hear.

Pursuing the chain of reasoning behind the National Teacher's statement "Then you could not hear my voicing of the Dharma," you should stew on what the enlightened state of Buddhas and saintly ones is. The National Teacher's underlying principle is, namely, "When the nonsentient express the Dharma, the saintly can hear It, and when the National Teacher expressed the Dharma, the monk could hear It." You should, day after day, deeply and at length, do your utmost to explore this chain of reasoning through your training. Now I would like to put it to the National Teacher—and I am not asking about sentient beings after they hear the Dharma—how is it with sentient beings at the very moment when they hear the Dharma being expressed?

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Our Founding Ancestor, Great Master Tōzan Ryōkai, while training under the great monk, Abbot Ungan Donjō, once asked the Abbot, "What person can hear the Dharma expressed by a nonsentient being?"

Abbot Ungan answered, "The nonsentient can hear It."

Tōzan then asked, "O Venerable Monk, can you hear It or not?"

The Abbot replied, "If I heard It, you would be unable to hear my expressing of the Dharma."

Tōzan then said, "If that is the way things are, then Venerable Monk, I have not heard your expressing of the Dharma."

The Abbot responded, "Since you have not heard even what I have given voice to, how could you possibly hear the expressing of the Dharma by nonsentient beings!"

Thereupon, Tōzan composed the following verse, which he presented to the Abbot.

How wondrous! Oh, how wondrous!
The Dharma voiced by the nonsentient boggles the mind.
When we hear It with our ears, in the end It is hard to comprehend.
When we hear It with our Eye, we can, by all means, understand It.

You will need to do your utmost, not only in this life but also in many later ones, to examine in detail the principle underlying Tōzan's saying, "What person can hear the Dharma expressed by a nonsentient being?" This question is certainly equipped with the merit of also being a statement.[5] This remark of his has Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow. Not only is it a Transmitting of Mind by means of Mind, but it is also a transmitting of Mind by means of mind so that both new monks and novices who have been training for a long time may affirm It. It takes its place among the keys which unlock the doors to genuinely Transmitting both the kesa and the Dharma. How could anyone today possibly expect to realize It

5. That is, Tōzan's remark can be construed not only as a question but also as a statement: A 'person of What' can hear the Dharma expressed by a nonsentient being. 'A person of What', like 'such a person,' is a common way in Chinese Zen Buddhism to refer to one who has fully realized the Truth.

after an effort of three seasons or four months? Even though Tōzan had seen and heard the underlying principle that the National Teacher expressed as, "The Dharma that the nonsentient express can be heard by the saintly," nevertheless he now, once again, asked, "What person can hear the Dharma that the nonsentient express?" Does this confirm what the National Teacher said? Should we see what Tōzan said as a question or should we see it as a statement? If he was not agreeing with the National Teacher in general, how could he possibly have spoken as he did? If he was agreeing with the National Teacher in general, how could he possibly have failed to understand what the National Teacher was saying?

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> Abbot Ungan said, in effect, "The nonsentient can hear the Dharma that the nonsentient express."

In authentically Transmitting this bloodline of ours, we need to explore through our training the dropping off of body and mind. Saying that the nonsentient can hear the Dharma that the nonsentient express will be equivalent, in sum and substance, to saying that when Buddhas give voice to the Dharma, Buddhas can hear It. An assembly that is listening to the Dharma that the nonsentient express may be nonsentient, even though it is comprised of the sentient and the nonsentient, or of the worldly along with the wise and saintly. By relying on this Teaching in sum and substance, we can distinguish the true ones from the false in both the past and the present. Even though there are those who have come from India, if they are not true Ancestral Masters whose Transmission is authentic, you must not follow them. Even though they may have been part of a continuous succession who have studied for a thousand myriad years, if they are not in the succession of heir after heir who have received the genuine Transmission, we could hardly accept from them the mantle of the Dharma—that is, the kesa.

Now that the authentic Transmission has spread to Eastern lands, it should be easy to distinguish the functioning of the true from the false. Even if someone hears only the statement, "When a human being gives voice to the Dharma, human beings can hear It," that person may attain the Bones and Marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors. If you make it a matter of life and death when you listen to what Abbot Ungan and National Teacher Echū are saying, you will understand that 'the saintly' spoken of in "The saintly can hear It" means 'the nonsentient', and 'the nonsentient' spoken of in "The nonsentient can hear It" means 'the saintly'. It is to say, "What is expressed by the nonsentient <u>is</u> the Nonsentient" because the Dharma

expressed by the nonsentient is what the Nonsentient is. Hence, it is the Dharma that the Nonsentient expresses. It is the Nonsentient that expresses the Dharma.[6]

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> Our Founding Ancestor Tōzan said, "If that is the way things are, then Venerable Monk, I have not heard your expressing of the Dharma."

Here and now, his saying, "If that is the way things are…" takes up the principle underlying the statement, "When the nonsentient express the Dharma, the nonsentient can hear It." In accord with the principle behind "When the nonsentient express the Dharma, the nonsentient can hear It" is "Then Venerable Monk, I do not hear your expressing of the Dharma."[7] At this time, Tōzan is not only taking a back seat to the nonsentient's expressing of the Dharma, but he was also showing his eagerness to voice the Dharma for the sake of nonsentient beings with an ardor that pierced the very heavens. Not only had he thoroughly penetrated the nonsentient's expressing of the Dharma, but he had also thoroughly mastered, and gone beyond, 'hearing' versus 'not hearing' the nonsentient express the Dharma. And, pushing on, in the matter of the sentient giving voice to the Dharma, he had gone beyond 'expressing' versus 'not expressing,' and he had thoroughly penetrated 'expressing by those in the past', 'expressing by those in the present', and 'expressing by those in the future'. And moreover, in expressions of the Dharma that go beyond being heard or not being heard, he had completely clarified the principle of 'this is sentient' and 'this is nonsentient'.

To generalize, hearing the Dharma is not limited merely to the sphere of the ear as a sense organ or to someone's being conscious of sounds. We hear the Dharma with our whole vitality, with our whole mind, with our whole body, with our whole being. We hear It from 'before the time when "father" and "mother" were born'* and from before the time of the Lords of Awe-inspiring Voices until the limits of our future and throughout the limitless future. The Dharma is heard before the body and after the mind. There is much to be gained from these instances of hearing the Dharma, so do not think that unless our mental

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6. That is, when the word 'nonsentient' is capitalized, it refers to Buddha Nature Itself.

7. This statement was Tōzan's way of asserting that his True Self has not become enlightened because he recognized that this True Self (the 'I' here) is already enlightened and has always been so. At the same time, it is an expression of Tōzan's humility and his assertion that his Master's expression of the Dharma is within the realm of 'the saintly'.

consciousness is involved, there is nothing to be gained from hearing the Dharma. Someone whose mind has gone astray or whose body is sunk in a torpor can still profit from hearing the Dharma, just as someone who is unaware of their body and mind can also profit from hearing the Dharma. All Buddhas and all Ancestors invariably live through moments like these when They are becoming a Buddha or an Ancestor. How can the intellectual efforts of ordinary, worldly people possibly catch sight of how the mighty force of one's practice comes to behold Body and Mind? They cannot fully clarify for themselves even what the bounds of body and mind are. Once the meritorious seeds of hearing the Dharma have been sown within the fertile fields of body and mind, they will know no season of decay. Ultimately, they will sprout, and, with the passing of time, they will surely bear fruit.

Foolish people think:

> Though people may not be remiss in listening to the Dharma, if they do not progress along the path to understanding and if they do not have good enough memories, they will not be able to acquire any benefits. What is vitally important—be it with the body and mind of an ordinary person or of someone in a lofty position—is to devote oneself to memorizing the Dharma extensively by listening to It many times. If people forget what they have heard while attending a Dharma talk and go blank once they have left their seat, what benefit do you think there would be in that? What learning could possibly be gained by that?

They speak this way because they do not have a genuine Master and have never encountered 'such a person'.* It is understood that someone who has not received the genuine Face-to-Face Transmission is not a genuine teacher, whereas someone who has received the genuine Transmission of Buddha after Buddha is a genuine teacher. Foolish people speak of their holding the Dharma consciously in mind and, at least temporarily, not forgetting It. Actually, the merit of hearing the Dharma envelops both the mind and the conscious memory. At this very moment, there is the meritorious functioning of the Dharma which envelops our body and which even envelops us prior to the body's arising, which envelops our mind and even envelops us prior to the mind's arising, which envelops us after the mind has arisen, which envelops our causes, conditions, results, actions, forms, True Nature, and physical substance, which envelops the Buddhas and envelops the Ancestors, which envelops self and envelops others, and which envelops our skin, flesh, bones, and marrow, among other things. Its meritorious functioning fully

manifests, enveloping the words and ways of expressing It, and enveloping our everyday actions, such as sitting and reclining, as It heals and fills the universe.

Truly, the merit derived from hearing the Dharma is not easily recognized, but should you encounter the great assembly of an Ancestor of the Buddha and thoroughly explore Its Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow through training with him or her, there will be no time when the meritorious strength of their expressing the Dharma will not guide you, and there will be no place where you will not receive the strength derived from hearing the Dharma. In this fashion, by letting the waves of time pass either quickly or slowly in a natural way, you will see the coming forth of Its fruits. Even listening to It many times in order to memorize It extensively ought not to be discarded altogether, but you should not treat that one aspect as the primary tool. Those who are exploring the Matter with a Master should know this, and our Founding Ancestor Tōzan had thoroughly explored It.

> Abbot Ungan said, "Since you have not heard even what I have given voice to, how could you possibly hear the expressing of the Dharma by nonsentient beings!"

Here, Abbot Ungan has loosened his collar in order to certify that our Founding Ancestor Tōzan has the Bones and Marrow of the Forefathers, which Tōzan had just then revealed by manifesting his awakening to both enlightenment and the promise of Buddhahood. Ungan is saying, in effect, "You are as if you did not hear my expressing It." This is not Ungan's affirmation of some run-of-the-mill person. He was making clear that, even though nonsentient expressions of the Dharma are multi-faceted, they do not exist for the sake of the intellect. Tōzan's succeeding as Ungan's heir at this time is truly an intimate matter. Those in the realms of the mundane and the saintly cannot easily reach it or catch a glimpse of it.

> Thereupon Tōzan composed the following verse, which he presented to the Abbot:
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> *How wondrous! Oh, how wondrous!*
> *The Dharma voiced by the nonsentient boggles the mind.*

Thus the nonsentient, as well as the Dharma that the nonsentient express, are both difficult for the discriminating, deliberative mind to handle. What is this thing we call 'nonsentient'? You should explore through your training that it is not the mundane or the saintly, and that it is beyond being sentient or nonsentient.

'Mundane' and 'saintly', as well as 'sentient' and 'nonsentient', whether voiced or not voiced, will be on a level with the lunacies produced by discriminatory thinking. Now, since It is mind-boggling, It has been and will continue to be a great mystery. It cannot be reached by the wisdom and consciousness of the mundane or of the wise and holy, nor is It concerned with the plans and considerations of mortals or celestial hosts.

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When we hear It with our ears, in the end It is hard to comprehend.

Even if we had celestial ears, or ears attuned to the whole universe and to the whole of time, when we aim at listening with our ears, It is ultimately too difficult to understand. Even if we had an ear to the wall or an ear atop a pole, we could not understand the Dharma that the nonsentient express, because It is beyond sound. It is not that we cannot hear It with our ears, but even were we to do our utmost for a hundred thousand eons, ultimately It would be too difficult to understand. It has the everyday dignity of the One Way that is beyond sounds and forms: It does not reside in the nests and caves of the mundane and the saintly.

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When we hear It with our Eye, we can, by all means, understand It.

Certain people fancy this to mean, "What human beings in the present see as the coming and going of grasses and trees, and flowers and birds, is what may be described as 'hearing a sound with one's eyes.'" This point of view is completely mistaken and is not at all the Buddha Dharma, nor does the Buddha Dharma have any principle like this.

When we explore through our training our Founding Ancestor Tōzan's expression 'when we hear It with our Eye', the place where the Dharma expressed by the nonsentient resounds is in the Eye, and the place where the sound of the Dharma expressed by a sentient being manifests is in the eyes. You should thoroughly and broadly explore this Eye. Because hearing sound with the eyes must be comparable to hearing sound with the ears, hearing sound with the Eye must be unlike hearing sound with the ears. Do not explore this as "There are organs of hearing in the eyes," or as "Eyes are therefore ears," or as "Sounds are manifesting in the eyes."

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A former Master, Chōsa Keishin, once said, "The whole universe in all ten directions is the solitary Eye of a mendicant monk." Do not be eager to get into discussions about hearing sounds through this Eye being a reference to Tōzan's saying "When we hear It with our Eye." Even though you may study the words that the ancient Master spoke, namely, "The whole universe in all ten directions is the solitary Eye," the whole universe in all ten directions is the solitary Eye, and further, there are the thousand hands of Avalokiteshvara,* each with its Eye. And there are the thousand Eyes of the True Teaching. And there are thousands of Eyes in one's ears. And there are thousands of Eyes on the tip of one's tongue. And there are thousands of Eyes from the point of view of one's heart. And there are thousands of Eyes that penetrate our mind. And there are thousands of Eyes that penetrate our body. And there are thousands of poles, each with an Eye at its tip. And there are thousands of Eyes before our body appears. And there are thousands of Eyes before our mind appears. And there are thousands of Eyes within death. And there are thousands of Eyes within life. And there are thousands of Eyes of self. And there are thousands of Eyes of other. And there are thousands of Eyes atop our eyes. And there are thousands of Eyes that do the training. And there are thousands of Eyes that are vertical. And there are thousands of Eyes that are horizontal.

So, even though you may learn that the totality of all Eyes is the totality of all realms, you have still not fully experienced the Eye. Simply make it a pressing need to thoroughly explore hearing the Dharma expressed by the Nonsentient with your Eye. Now, the main point in what our Founding Ancestor Tōzan was saying is that it is difficult to comprehend with the ears the Dharma that the Nonsentient is expressing, for it is your Eye that hears the sound. And, further, there is hearing the sound as it permeates one's body, and there is hearing the sound with one's whole being. Even if you fully experience hearing the sound with your Eye, you need to come to the realization that the Dharma that the nonsentient express can indeed be heard by the nonsentient, and then let it go.

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Because this principle has been passed down, my late Master Tendō, an Old Buddha, said, "The vines of the bottle gourd embrace the bottle gourd's vines." This is a nonsentient being who is giving voice to the Dharma in which the awakened Eye of our Ancestor Ungan has been passed on, along with his Bones and Marrow. Based on the principle that all expressions of the Dharma are

nonsentient, nonsentient beings express the Dharma, which is a traditional Teaching. It is for the sake of the nonsentient that the nonsentient give voice to the Dharma. What is it that we call 'the nonsentient'? You need to know that it is the one who hears the Dharma that the Nonsentient expresses. And what is it that we call 'expressing the Dharma'? You need to know that it is that which does not know 'I am nonsentient'.

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Great Master Tōsu Daidō in Shuchou Province[8] was once asked by a monk, "Just what is this 'nonsentient beings express the Dharma' stuff all about?"

The Master responded, "Do not bad-mouth it."

What Tōsu is asserting here now is the very practice of the Dharma of an Old Buddha and it is the governing principle in our Ancestral tradition. Generally speaking, such statements as "Nonsentient beings express the Dharma," and "Expounding the Dharma is what a nonsentient being is," are instances of not bad-mouthing it. Keep in mind that the expounding of the Dharma by the nonsentient is precisely what the defining attribute of an Ancestor of the Buddha is. That bunch who have followed Rinzai and Tokusan don't know about it; only our Ancestors of the Buddha have explored it thoroughly through their training.

Given to the assembly at Kippō-ji Temple in the Yoshida district of Echizen Province on the second day of the tenth lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (November 15, 1243).

Copied here on the fifteenth day of the tenth lunar month in the same year (November 28, 1243).

Ejō

8. There is an interpolation in the text at this point, whose authorship is uncertain. It reads: He was Dharma heir to Suibi Mugaku; in his lifetime he was called Daidō Myōkaku, as well as the Old Buddha Tōsu.

55

On Washing Your Face

(Semmen)

Translator's Introduction: The importance that Dōgen placed on this discourse is signaled in the postscript by the fact that he gave it to his community on three occasions. The first occasion was in 1239 as a companion piece to Discourse 7: On Washing Yourself Clean (*Senjō*). It was repeated with the addition of a final paragraph in 1243, when he and his monks were staying in Kippō-ji Temple while Eihei-ji Temple was being built nearby. The third delivery, with some emendations, was given at Eihei-ji in 1250. This last version is the one presented here.

The title has a double meaning. On a literal level, 'face' refers to the physical part of the body; on a metaphorical level, it refers to the surface of the mind's mirror, which is also being cleansed by seeing the spiritual significance of the mundane act of cleaning the former. As the text makes abundantly clear, on the literal level the face includes not only the whole outer surface of the head but also, most importantly, the mouth, teeth, and tongue. An implement for brushing the teeth similar to that which Dōgen describes is still the preferred form of toothbrush with many Theravadin monks.

In the *Lotus Scripture* it says in verse:

Anoint your body with fragrant oil
After having washed away all dust and dirt,
And put on a fresh, clean robe,
So that you are clean both within and without.

This Teaching is one that the Tathagata voiced before the Lotus assembly for the sake of those who practice the four forms of conduct that ease the way of practice.[1] It is unequaled in His Teachings at other assemblies, and is surely unlike that found in other Scriptures. Since this is so, cleansing your body and mind and anointing yourself with fragrant oil after having removed the dust and dirt of life is foremost in the Buddha's Teaching. And putting on a fresh, clean robe is one of the methods for purifying yourself. By washing away the dust and dirt and by anointing yourself with fragrant oil, you will be clean both within and without. When both

1. These four forms of conduct were also voiced by the Tathagata in the *Lotus Scripture.* One translation may be found in "The Scripture on the Conduct That Eases the Way" from *Buddhist Writings on Meditation and Daily Practice*, (Shasta Abbey Press, 1994), pp. 5-25.

inside and outside are clean, the conditions around you and the conditions within you will be immaculate.

Even so, befuddled people who do not understand what the Buddha's Dharma is and who do not practice the Buddha's Way say, "Bathing merely cleanses the body's skin, but it does not cleanse the five vital organs or the six forms of entrails within the body. Since it does not cleanse each of these, one after the other, we cannot really become immaculate. Therefore, it follows that we cannot really cleanse our bodies." People who talk like this do not yet know the Buddha's Dharma, nor have they even heard It; they have not encountered a true teacher or met an offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors. You should just cast aside the words of folks who hold to false views like these. Instead, explore and put into practice the True Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors. The limits of all thoughts and things have never been determined, and what lies within and outside the various elements, likewise, cannot be fully grasped. This is why what lies within our mind and outside our body is also beyond our grasp.

Be that as it may, when bodhisattvas* who are in their final body[2] are sitting in the Meditation Hall and are just on the verge of realizing the Way, even they wash their kesa* and then cleanse their body and mind. This is part of the ordinary, everyday behavior of all Buddhas in all times—past, present and future—everywhere in the ten directions.

Bodhisattvas who are in their final body are different from other types of beings in all matters. Their meritorious wise discernment and the splendor of their body and mind are most precious and unsurpassed. The same will also be true for their methods of washing and cleansing, not to mention the fact that everyone's body and mind, along with their limitations, differ according to the times. Within the time of one period of seated meditation, it is said, three thousand worlds have passed away. Even though such a period of time is like this, it is not some measure of self or other: it is the meritorious fruit of the Buddha Dharma. The measure of body and mind is beyond 'five feet' or 'six feet', because body and mind are beyond the five or six feet that we conventionally define as 'five feet' and 'six feet'.

The place where body and mind exist is also beyond both the limits and the limitlessness of the realms of self or other, or of the whole universe or immeasurable universes, because "Right here is where the What is, whether the

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* See *Glossary.*

2. A technical term for one who is about to realize Buddhahood. It is synonymous with a non-returner, which is the third of the four stages of arhathood. A brief explanation of these four stages can be found in the *Glossary*.

Matter* is put clumsily or put delicately."[3] The dimensions of mind are beyond anything the discriminations of intellective thought can possibly know: they are beyond anything that the non-discriminations of not thinking can possibly fathom. Because this is the way the dimensions of body and mind are, it is also the way the dimensions of cleansing are. To grasp what these dimensions are and to train until one fully realizes them are precisely what Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor are concerned with and have held to. We should not take our estimate of ourselves to be foremost, nor should we take our estimate of ourselves to be real. Therefore, it follows that when we wash and cleanse ourselves in this manner, we fully fathom the dimensions of body and mind, and we make ourselves immaculate. Whether we see ourselves as comprised of six elements, or five skandhas,* or of That which is indestructible, through our cleansing we can make everything immaculate.

This does not mean that we are immaculate only after we have fetched water and washed ourselves with it. How can water be inherently pure or inherently impure? Even if it were inherently pure or inherently impure, we cannot assert that it makes the place we bring it to pure or impure. It is simply that, when we preserve the methods that the Buddhas and Ancestors have trained in and actualized, then a Buddha's methods for using water with which to wash the body and using the Water with which to cleanse the mind will have been handed down to us. Accordingly, in training to realize Buddhahood, we go beyond 'clean', we discard 'unclean', and we abandon 'not clean' and 'not unclean'.

Hence, even though we may not yet have soiled ourselves, we wash and cleanse ourselves, and even when we have reached Great Immaculacy, we still wash and cleanse ourselves. This process has been preserved solely in the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors. It is beyond what those who are non-Buddhists understand. Were the situation as those befuddled persons say, even if we were to reduce the five vital organs and the six forms of entrails to particles of dust so minute that they were like empty space, and then completely use up the waters of the great ocean in washing them, unless we washed the inside of these particles, how could they possibly be immaculate? And unless we washed the inside of empty space, how could we possibly achieve complete immaculacy within and without?

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3. This quotation is a remark made by Meditation Master Fuke to Meditation Master Rinzai when both were novice monks. This kōan story, as recounted by Dōgen in his Chinese *Shinji Shōbōgenzō,* is given in the Addendum to Discourse 21: On Buddha Nature *(Busshō)*, p. 279.

Such befuddled people are also incapable of recognizing the process of cleansing emptiness. We make use of Emptiness to cleanse emptiness, and we make use of Emptiness to cleanse body and mind. Those who, with faith, accept cleansing as a form of the Dharma will be preserving what the Buddhas and Ancestors trained in and came to realize. That is to say, in the True Dharma of Buddha after Buddha, Ancestor after Ancestor, and Successor after Successor of the Buddhas and Ancestors, when we engage in cleansing ourselves, then body and mind—both inside and out—along with the five vital organs, the six forms of entrails, the outer world and the inner world, the inside, outside, and middle of the realms of thoughts and things, as well as unbounded space, are all instantly immaculate. When we make use of incense or flowers in purifying ourselves, then our deeds of past, present, and future, as well as their accompanying causes and conditions, are instantly immaculate.

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The Buddha said, "By washing thrice and perfuming thrice, our body and mind become immaculate." Thus, the method for washing our body and cleansing our mind is to habitually do one perfuming with one washing, and by such a sequence to do three washings and three perfumings. We then pay homage to the Buddha, recite some bit of Scripture, and do seated meditation followed by walking meditation. Once our walking meditation is finished and before we endeavor to sit up straight in seated meditation again, it is said that we should always wash our feet. Even if our feet have not become sullied, this is still the method of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

In these three washings and three perfumings of which He spoke, washing once refers to taking a bath: it is bathing the whole body. And after having done so, we get dressed as usual, then we light incense in a small censer and cense inside the bosom of our upper robe, as well as censing our kesa, our meditation place, and so forth. After that, we bathe again and cense again. We do it like this three times. This is the ceremony that accords with the Dharma. At this time, even though the six sense organs and the six types of objects that stimulate them are still there, they will undoubtedly manifest the virtue of immaculacy before your very eyes. And, as the Buddha taught, even though we may not be rid of the three poisons of greed, hate, and delusion or of the four topsy-turvy beliefs,[4] the virtue of being immaculate will immediately manifest before our very eyes. Who can fathom It by using conventional ways of thinking? What person can spot It by using his

4. Namely, believing that what is impermanent has permanence, that what causes suffering is pleasurable, that what is sullied is pure, and that what is without self has a self.

ordinary eyes? For instance, when we wash aloes wood to cleanse it for making incense, we should not break it into bits and pieces before washing it, nor should we grind it into a powder before washing it; it attains immaculacy simply by our washing the whole piece, in a body.

The method for cleansing has been definitely set forth in the Buddha's Teaching. We wash our body, we wash our mind, we wash our feet, we wash our face, we wash our eyes, we wash our mouth, we wash our private parts, we wash our hands, we wash our alms bowl, we wash our kesa, and we wash our head. All of these are part of the True Teaching of all the Buddhas and Ancestors of the past, present, and future.

When we undertake to make an offering to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, we first wash our hands and face, rinse out our mouth, and put on a clean robe. We then bring some type of fragrant wood, and, taking fresh water in a clean bowl, we wash this incense. Once this is done, we offer it to the realm of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. May the offering we make to the Triple Treasure be as sandalwood incense from the Malaya Mountains that has been washed in Lake Anavatapta's water of eight virtues.[5]

Washing the face was passed down from India in the west and spread throughout China in the east. Although the procedure is made clear enough in various passages in the monastic regulations, it will still be something that Buddhas and Ancestors hold to and directly pass on to Their genuine successors. It is not merely something that Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor have come to practice over the centuries; it has flowed down through hundreds of thousands of millions of eons of the past, and will continue to do so in the future. It does not merely remove dirt and grime; it is the lifeblood of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

It is said that if we do not wash the face, both our receiving obeisances and our making obeisances to others will be stained.

> *When we bow, and bow to others,*
> *If we can make our bow to That which is bowed to,*
> *Then our True Nature will be free and serene,*
> *For 'True Nature' too will have dropped away.*

This is why we must, by all means, wash the face.

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5. The Malaya Mountains in southern India are renowned for their highly prized sandalwood. Lake Anavatapta is considered by some as the source of the four major rivers of India, and by others as a lake on Mount Sumeru. Its eight virtues are its sweetness, its coolness, its softness, its lightness, its purity, its absence of odor, its harmlessness to the throat, and its harmlessness to the stomach.

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The time for washing our face may be during the pre-dawn fifth watch or it may be after the sun has risen. When I was staying with my late Master, Nyojō, he took the third period of the third watch (around 2:00 A.M.) to be the time for doing it. Putting on our skirt and undershirt, or a full under-robe, and carrying our hand towel, we proceeded to a washstand. A hand towel is a piece of cloth twelve feet long. It should not be white in color since white is prohibited.

It says in the *Great Scripture on the Three Thousand Forms of Everyday Behavior for Monks*:

> There are five things to consider when using the hand towel. First, wipe with the top and bottom ends. Second, wipe your hands with one end and wipe your face with the other. Third, do not wipe your nose with it. Fourth, should it become soiled through using it to wipe up grease or dirt, by all means wash it right away. Fifth, do not wipe your body with it. When you wash, each of you should have your own towel.

When handling our hand towel, we should take care of it in the following way. We fold the hand towel in two and then drape it over our left forearm. We wipe our face with one half of the hand towel and our hands with the other half. The statement "Do not wipe your nose with it" means that we do not use it to wipe the insides of our nostrils or the mucus from them. We should not use the hand towel to wipe our sides, back, belly, navel, thighs, or lower legs. We should wash our hand towel if it becomes soiled with dirt or grime. When it gets wet, we dry it by the fire or hang it out in the sun to dry. We should not use a hand towel when taking a bath.

The washing place for those in the Cloud Hall is the rear washstand.[6] The rear washstand is to the west of the Illumination Hall.[7] This layout is what has been passed on to us. For retreat huts and private quarters, a washstand is put in a convenient place. The Abbot washes up in the abbatical quarters. In the residence for elderly monks, a washstand has been put in a convenient place. When the Abbot is residing in the Cloud Hall, he should use the rear washstand to wash up.

When going to the washstand, we hang the middle part of our hand towel over the nape of our neck. Bringing the two ends in front over our shoulders, we

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6. The Cloud Hall is the hall where the monks meditate. 'The rear washstand' refers specifically to the washstand behind the Cloud Hall.

7. The Illumination Hall is used when senior monks other than the Abbot give Dharma talks.

use both hands to take the ends under our arms and to our back. Then, crossing the ends, we bring the left end around to the right and the right end around to the left, and tie the ends in front of our chest. When we do it in this fashion, the upper part of our robe is covered by the hand towel, and our sleeves are bound up by it above our elbows, while below our elbows, our arms and hands are left exposed. It is just as if we had tucked up our sleeves with a sash.[8]

Next, if we are at the rear washstand, taking a wash bucket in hand, we go to where the iron cauldron is and get a bucket of hot water. Then, returning, we put it atop the washstand. If we are somewhere else, we pour hot water from the hot water tub into a washbowl.

Next, we use our willow twig.[9] Nowadays, in various monasteries in Great Sung China, the method for chewing a willow twig has long been discarded and is not passed on, so there is no place for chewing a willow twig. But today at Eihei-ji Temple on Mount Kichijō there is a place for chewing a willow twig, which is our present way of looking at the matter. Accordingly, first we chew the willow twig. Then, holding the willow twig in our right hand, we recite the appropriate verse. I In the "Pure Deeds" chapter of the *Avatamsaka Scripture*, it says the following:

> *Taking this willow twig in hand,*
> *I pray that all sentient beings*
> *May realize in their hearts the True Dharma*
> *And thereby become naturally pure.*

After we have finished reciting this text and are about to chew the willow twig again, we should then recite the following:

> *Chewing the willow twig this morning,*
> *I pray that all sentient beings*
> *May obtain the teeth for overcoming evil,*
> *So that they may chew up their defiling passions.*

Having finished reciting this text, we chew on our willow twig.

The length of a willow twig is the width of four, eight, twelve, or sixteen fingers. As it says in Article 34 of the *Code of Behavior for Members of the Greater Sangha*, "We use for our teeth a twig of suitable dimensions. The longest is the width of sixteen fingers, the shortest is the width of four fingers." We need to keep in mind that it should not be shorter than four fingers and that beyond sixteen

8. The sleeves worn by monastics during Dōgen's time were of a large, koromo style and therefore needed to be bound up.

9. The willow twig was used as a toothbrush.

fingers is not a suitable dimension. The thickness is that of our little finger. However, there is nothing to preclude it from being thinner than that. Its shape is that of the little finger: one end thick, one end thin. The thicker end is chewed into fine shreds. As it says in the *Great Scripture on the Three Thousand Forms of Everyday Behavior for Monks*, "Do not go beyond a third of an inch along the length of the willow twig." We must chew it well, then rub and clean the front and back of our teeth as if we were polishing them. We rub and polish, and then rinse out our mouth from time to time. We should thoroughly polish and clean the base of our teeth above the gums and thoroughly scrape between our teeth, and wash that area clean. When our mouth is rinsed out again and again, our teeth will be washed clean.

After we have done this, we need to clean our tongue. It says in the *Great Scripture on the Three Thousand Forms of Everyday Behavior for Monks*:

> There are five things to consider when scraping the tongue. First, do not go beyond three times. Second, if your tongue begins to bleed, by all means cease. Third, do not soil your sanghati robe or your feet by flailing your hands about.[10] Fourth, when discarding your willow twig, do not put it where others walk. Fifth, always scrape your tongue in a screened off area.

In the phrase 'scrape your tongue three times', 'scraping your tongue' means putting some water into your mouth and scraping your tongue repeatedly. It does not mean scraping it just three times. Keep in mind the statement that if your tongue begins to bleed, by all means cease.

As to the remark that we should thoroughly scrape our tongue, it says in the *Great Scripture on the Three Thousand Forms of Everyday Behavior for Monks*, "Purifying your mouth means chewing a willow twig, rinsing your mouth out, and scraping your tongue." Hence, the willow twig is something that the Buddhas and Ancestors, along with Their successors, have come to preserve and hold to.

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> The Buddha was living in the Bamboo Grove Park at Rajagriha, along with twelve hundred and fifty monks. It was the first day of the twelfth month, and King Prasenajit was providing food for them on that day. At daybreak he personally offered the Buddha a willow twig. After the Buddha had taken and thoroughly chewed it, He discarded

10. The sanghati robe is the largest of three basic types of kesa. Dōgen gives a detailed explanation of all three in Discourse 84: On the Spiritual Merits of the Kesa *(Kesa Kudoku)*.

> what remained. No sooner had it touched the ground than it came to life, with roots and sprouts gushing forth in great profusion, until it was five hundred yojanas* tall. Its leaves and branches spread out like a cloud to a circumference of the same magnitude. At length, it brought forth blossoms as large as cart wheels. Finally, it produced fruit the size of five-gallon jars. The roots and buds, branches and leaves, were entirely comprised of the seven treasures,* whose various colors glimmered with extraordinary beauty. In accord with their color, they gave off rays of light that eclipsed both sun and moon. When the fruit was eaten, it proved as delicious as nectar. Its fragrance filled the four quarters; whoever smelled it was truly filled with delight. As the fragrant breeze came blowing, the branches and leaves rubbed against each other so that they all gave forth melodious sounds, delightfully voicing the essence of the Dharma. Whoever heard this never tired of listening. The hearts of all the people who witnessed this transformation of the tree grew ever more pure and their reverence and trust deepened. The Buddha then gave voice to the Dharma according to their ability to grasp Its intent, so that all their hearts were opened to comprehend It. Those who sought what the Buddha intended attained their goal and were reborn in a heavenly state, their number being extremely great.[11]

The method for making an alms offering to the Buddha and the assembled monks was invariably to proffer willow twigs at daybreak. After that, various other offerings were prepared. There are many instances of willow twigs being given to the Buddha, and there are many instances of the Buddha using a willow twig, but, for the time being, I have presented the story of King Prasenajit's personally making the alms offering, along with the story of this great tree, because you should know about them.

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Also on that day, six non-Buddhist teachers were all bested in debate by the Buddha. Being dismayed and frightened, they took to flight. Ultimately, as the Scripture recounts:

> All six teachers together threw themselves into the river and drowned. The nine hundred million followers of these six teachers all

11. This narrative is quoted from "The Defeat of the Six Teachers," which is the second chapter of the *Scripture on Accounts of the Wise and the Befuddled*.

> came to the Buddha, seeking to be His disciples. Upon the Buddha's welcoming them as monks, their beards and hair naturally came off, and they had Dharma robes on their bodies, for they had all become mendicant monks. As the Buddha voiced the Dharma for their benefit, pointing out Its essence, they disentangled themselves from their defiling passions and fully attained arhathood.*

Thus, because the Tathagata was already accustomed to using willow twigs, both ordinary people and those in lofty positions made alms offerings of them. It is clear that all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, along with disciples of the Buddha, beyond doubt, hold to chewing a willow twig. Should anyone not use a willow twig, they will have forfeited the Teaching. And what a pity that would be!

It says in the Bodhisattva Precepts section of the *Scripture of Brahma's Net:*

> During the two retreat periods in winter and summer, as well as during the renewal period at the beginning of summer when pilgrimages are undertaken, as a disciple of the Buddha, you should always have for your personal use a tooth-cleaning willow twig, soap, your three monastic robes, a water jug, your alms bowl, your bowing mat, your mendicant's traveling staff, an incense burner, a clothes box, a water filter, a towel, a razor, something to light a fire with, tweezers, a hammock, a Scripture and *Vinaya* text, an image of the Buddha, and some image of a Bodhisattva. Whenever you go on a pilgrimage or travel for other spiritual reasons, be it for thirty miles or three hundred, you should always carry these eighteen objects with you. The retreat periods last from the fifteenth day of the first month to the fifteenth day of the third month and from the fifteenth day of the eighth month to the fifteenth day of the tenth month; during these two periods you should always carry these eighteen objects with you when you travel, just as a bird carries its two wings.

Not even one of these eighteen objects should be missing. If you lack any, you would be like a bird that had shed one wing. Even though one wing remained, the bird would be unable to fly, for its condition would not be the way birds are. Similarly for bodhisattvas: if they are not equipped with these eighteen 'wings', it will not be the way that bodhisattvas do their practice.

Among these eighteen articles, the willow twig already occupies the first position and should be the very first thing you supply yourself with. Folks who are clear about the use of the willow twig will be bodhisattvas who are clear about the

Buddha Dharma. Those who have not yet clarified this matter have probably not encountered the Buddha Dharma even in their dreams.

Hence, to see the willow twig is to encounter the Buddhas and Ancestors. If someone should ask me, "What is its purpose?" I would reply, "How fortunate we are to have witnessed that old fellow Dōgen chewing on a willow twig."

All Buddhas and bodhisattvas of past, present, and future invariably accept and hold to this Bodhisattva Precept from the *Scripture of Brahma's Net.* Thus, they have likewise come to accept and hold to the willow twig in the three periods of time.

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It says in the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple:*

> It is imperative that you read, recite aloud, and thoroughly comprehend both the Ten Great Precepts and the Forty-eight Less Grave Precepts in the Mahayana* *Scripture of Brahma's Net*, and thereby know well what keeps to them or breaks them, as well as what they permit or prohibit. But do so in accord with the sage words from the golden mouth of the Buddha. Do not indulge in following ordinary people in such matters.

By all means, you need to understand that Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor have correctly Transmitted the import of what this quotation is saying. Whatever deviates from this is not the Buddha's Way, nor is it the Buddha's Teaching, nor is it the Way of the Ancestors.

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Be that as it may, in Great Sung China today the willow twig is never to be seen. In the fourth month of the eighteenth year of the Chinese Chia-ting Era (1223) when I began to visit the various monasteries and temples in China, the willow twig was unknown to the monks, and it was likewise unknown in court and country both to ordinary people as well as to those in lofty positions. Because it was unknown to any in the monastic family, whenever I inquired about the method for using a willow twig, they would turn pale and lose their composure. What a pity that this spotless method has been lost. Folks who barely rinse out their mouths have fashioned a device by cutting more than an inch of hair from a horse's tail and then setting it, two inches deep, into a piece of ox horn about a third of an inch thick and six or seven inches long, so that it quite resembles a horse's mane. This is the only thing they use for cleaning their teeth. It is an inappropriate implement for monks to use. As it may well be an unclean utensil, it is not an instrument of the Buddha's Teaching. Pious common folk, who worship the

emperor and other celestial beings, are bound to be repelled by it. Further, commoners and monks both use this instrument as a tool for brushing the dirt off their shoes, or use it for brushing their hair. Though some of these tools may be a bit larger or smaller, they are one and the same in their usage. And only one in ten thousand use even this inadequate device. As a result, the breath of monks and householders alike is foul smelling. When people two or three feet away speak, their bad breath comes forth and even a whiff of it is hard to take. Not even those praised as venerable senior monks who have realized the Way or those who are known as teachers and guides for ordinary people and those in lofty positions know that there is a method for rinsing the mouth, scraping the tongue, and chewing a willow twig. Based on this, we cannot begin to know in how many other ways we may now find the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors in decay. Although I do not begrudge either committing my dewdrop existence to thousands of miles of blue waves, or my crossing foreign mountains and rivers in order to find the Way, yet I must regret this sad state of affairs. How many unstained methods have already disappeared there? How sad, how very sad!

Despite this, throughout the whole of Japan both monks and laity in court and country are all personally acquainted with the willow twig, which may be due to their personal experience of the Buddha's light of wisdom. Even so, their way of chewing a willow twig is not like the standard practice, and the method for scraping the tongue has not been introduced to them, probably due to their being in too big a hurry. Still, those who are aware that they should use a willow twig—in contrast with the people of Sung who are totally unaware of the willow twig—have naturally learned this method of the spiritually preeminent ones. Among the practices of mountain hermits, we find that they too use the willow twig. You need to realize that, as they say, it is the instrument whereby all may emerge from the dust; it is the tool of immaculacy.

It says in the *Great Scripture on the Three Thousand Forms of Everyday Behavior for Monks*:

> There are five things to consider when using a willow twig for chewing. First, cut it according to the proper length. Second, split it according to the proper method. Third, when chewing its head, do not go beyond one third of an inch. Fourth, in cleaning between the teeth, chew it three times. Fifth, make use of the sap to bathe your eyes.

Our present-day practice of washing our eyes by scooping up some water in our right hand from the water that we used for chewing the willow twig and rinsing out our mouth was originally a doctrine in the *Great Scripture on the Three Thousand*

Forms of Everyday Behavior for Monks. Nowadays in Japan, it is a long-standing domestic custom. The method for scraping the tongue was transmitted by the exemplary monk Eisai.[12] Before disposing of your used willow twig, use both hands to split it in two, tearing it from the chewed end. Put the sharp edge of the split twig crosswise on your tongue and scrape it. That is, take up some water with your right hand, put it in your mouth and rinse it out, and then scrape your tongue. Again and again, rinse your mouth and scrape your tongue, scraping repeatedly with the edge of the split willow twig as if you were attempting to draw blood.

When you are rinsing your mouth, you should silently recite the following verse, as put forth in the *Avatamsaka Scripture*:

In cleansing my mouth and teeth,
I pray that all sentient beings
Will turn towards the Gate to Immaculacy
And ultimately attain freedom.

Repeatedly rinse your mouth out and use the ball of the first, second, or third finger of your right hand to cleanse the inside of your lips and under your tongue, as if you were licking them clean. When you have recently eaten something oily, you should use ground honey locust pods. When you have finished with the willow twig, you should then dispose of it out of sight. After you have disposed of your willow twig, you should snap your fingers three times. There is a container for disposing of willow twigs on the rear washstand. In other places, you should dispose of it in an unobtrusive place. You should spit out the water from rinsing your mouth somewhere other than in the washbowl.

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Next, we need to wash our face. Scooping hot water from the washbowl in both hands, we wash all over, from the forehead to the eyebrows, the eyes, the nose, the inside of the ears, the crown of the head, and the cheeks. We should first douse them thoroughly with hot water and then scrub them. Take care not to let tears, spittle, or nasal mucus drip into the washbowl water. When washing in this manner, do not use excessive amounts of hot water, spilling or slopping it outside the washbowl, so that you run out of it too soon. Wash until the dirt and oil has been removed. Wash behind your ears, since water does not customarily reach there. Rinse your eyeballs, since they cannot be cleaned with sand. And washing even from your hairline up over the crown of your head is ordinary, everyday

12. The Japanese monk who introduced the Rinzai tradition into Japan. He was the first Zen Master under whom Dōgen trained.

monastic behavior. After you have finished washing the face and have disposed of the water in your washbowl, snap your fingers three times.

Next, wipe and dry your face with one end of your hand towel. After that, take off the hand towel, fold it as it was before, and hang it over your left arm. At the rear washstand behind the Cloud Hall are face-wiping cloths for common use; long pieces of toweling have also been provided, and there are charcoal braziers. Members of the community need not worry about there not being sufficient toweling for drying their face. They can dry their heads and faces with those provided or use their own hand towel: both are proper methods.

When washing your face, do not make a sound by noisily clanging the ladle against your bowl. And do not let the surrounding area get wet by splashing hot or cold water about. Quietly reflect on the fact that, even though we were born in the final five hundred years of the Dharma and live on a remote island, the merit that we have accumulated from the past has not fallen into decay. We should rejoice in deepest gratitude that we have had correctly passed on to us the ordinary, everyday behavior of earlier Buddhas and that, without stain, we do our training to experience the Truth. In returning to the Cloud Hall, we should step lightly and speak with a low voice.

In the private quarters of aged and virtuous monks, without question there needs to be a washstand, since not washing the face is counter to the Dharma.

When washing the face, there are methods for using facial medicines.

In short, chewing a willow twig and washing the face are the True Teachings of Old Buddhas. Those who do their utmost to train with a heart that is fixed on the Way should train with and experience these Teachings. Using cold water when there is no hot water is an ancient custom, a long-established method. When there is neither hot nor cold water available, in the early morning wipe your face thoroughly dry, using a fragrant grass, powdered incense, or the like. Then, pay homage to the Buddha, recite a Scripture, light incense, and do seated meditation. To do our religious practices before we have washed our face is discourteous.

Delivered to the assembly on the twenty-third day of the tenth lunar month in the first year of the En'o era (November 21, 1239) at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple, Yamashiro Province.

In India and China, kings, princes, ministers of state, government officials, lay Buddhists, monks, men and women in court and country, all the people throughout wash their faces. Among their household goods is a washbasin, perhaps of gold, perhaps of tin. Every morning, some people perform the act of washing

their face at a shrine to a celestial deity or at the gravesite of their ancestors. Others offer their face-washing at the stupa* of a Buddha or an Ancestor. After lay Buddhists and monks have washed their faces and straightened their clothing, they bow to those in heavenly states, and bow to the resident spirits, and bow to the Ancestors of their lineage, and bow to their parents. They bow to their teachers, and to the Triple Treasure, and to the myriad beings in the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form, and they bow to the benevolent guardian spirits. There are none who forget to wash their face, not even farmers and rice growers, fishermen and woodcutters. Even so, they do not chew the willow twig. In Japan, amongst emperors and ministers of state, old and young, courtiers and gentry, householders and monks, both ordinary people and those in lofty positions all remember to chew a willow twig and rinse out their mouth, but they do not wash their face. In each country, it is a case of one strong point and one shortcoming. To preserve and hold to the practice of washing the face and chewing a willow twig corrects this deficiency and is the luminous manifestation of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

Delivered again to the assembly on the twentieth day of the tenth lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (December 2, 1243) at Kippō-ji Temple in Yoshida Prefecture, Echizen Province.

Delivered to the monks on the eleventh day of the first lunar month in the second year of the Zenchō era (February 13, 1250) at Eihei-ji Temple on Mount Kichijō in Yoshida Prefecture, Echizen Province.

56

On the Model for Doing Meditation

(Zazengi)

To train under a Master is to do seated meditation. In doing seated meditation, a quiet place serves well. Spread out your meditation mat so that it lies thickly. Do not put it in a place that is windy or smoky, and do not expose it to rain or dew. Make the place where you sit secure for your body. There is the example from the past of Shakyamuni's sitting in a diamond-hard place under the Bodhi tree, seated upon a huge rock in the shape of a lotus, upon which He had spread out a thick cushion of dry grass. Your sitting place should be lit, without letting it be in the dark, day or night. Make 'warm in winter and cool in summer' your technique.

Set aside all involvements and give everything a rest. Do not think about what is good or what is bad. Do not exercise your discriminatory mind or weigh and judge your mind's remembrances, concepts, and reflections! Do not aim at becoming a Buddha, and drop off any concern with whether you are sitting or lying down. Eat and drink in moderation. Cherish the light of days and the dark of nights. Take to doing seated meditation as though you were extinguishing a fire upon your head. The Fifth Chinese Ancestor, Daiman Kōnin of Mount Ōbai, did not do anything particularly different: he just diligently did seated meditation.

When sitting in meditation, wear your kesa.* Spread out your mat and put your round cushion atop it. Do not sit in lotus position with the cushion supporting the whole of your legs, but put it well behind the back half of your legs. Consequently, the mat will be under your knees and thighs while the cushion will be under the base of your spine. This is the method for seated meditation that has been used by Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor.

Some people sit in the half lotus position and some sit in the full lotus position. When sitting in the full lotus position, we put the right foot atop the left thigh and the left foot atop the right thigh. The tips of our toes should line up

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* See *Glossary*.

uniformly on our thighs and not lie unevenly. When sitting in half lotus position, we simply place our left foot on our right thigh.[1]

We should drape our clothing in a loose-fitting manner, yet neatly. We place our right hand atop our left foot and our left hand atop our right hand. The tips of our two thumbs touch each other. Both hands are then held close to our body. The point at which the two thumbs touch should be placed opposite the navel.

You should sit with your body upright, that is, not leaning to the right, inclining to the left, bending forward, or arching back. You need to align your ears with your shoulders and your nose with your navel. Let your tongue rest in your mouth. Breathe through your nose. Your lips and teeth should be touching. Your eyes should remain open, but neither widely nor narrowly so.

With body and mind regulated in this manner, breathe out once. Sit with the stillness of a mountain, and let what you are thinking about be based on not deliberately trying to think about any particular thing. How can what anyone is thinking about be based on not deliberately thinking about something? Simply, by not making 'what I am thinking about' the point of your meditation. This, then, is the technique for doing seated meditation. Seated meditation is a practice and not something for intellectual study. It is the Dharma Gate to peace and joy. It is unstained training to realize the Truth.

Delivered to the monks at Kippō-ji Training Temple, Yoshida Prefecture, Echizen Province, in the eleventh lunar month of the first year of the Kangen era (December 1243).

Copied in the chief disciple Ejō's quarters at Kippō Hermitage, Echizen Province, on the twentieth day of the first lunar month in the second year of the same era (March 1, 1244).

1. Readers who choose to follow Dōgen's practice of sitting in full or half lotus are cautioned to alternate which leg is on top so as to avoid back problems that can develop over long-term practice. Also, to avoid putting injurious strain on the spine and knees, several other modes of sitting have developed in the Zen tradition, such as sitting in a chair or on a meditation bench. One may even meditate while lying down.

57

On the Plum Blossom

(Baika)

Translator's Introduction: The plum tree holds a particular place in Chinese culture, one that was transplanted into the culture of Japan. As the earliest blooming of all trees, it comes into flower in the latter part of winter and is therefore considered a harbinger of spring. In Buddhist contexts, it is used as a metaphor for Shakyamuni Buddha, who was considered the first to bring forth the blossoming of the Dharma, and whose blossoming has inspired others to seek and find the Way.

By extension, the plum tree is also seen as a reference to one's Master and, in his writings, Dōgen frequently refers to his Master as an 'Old Buddha'. Further, the plum blossom is used as a metaphor for the udumbara flower which Shakyamuni held aloft, His eyes atwinkle. Upon seeing this, His disciple Makakashō broke out into a smile in response to his spiritual recognition of True Nature.

Dōgen's commentaries in this discourse are based primarily on various poems that his late Master, Tendō Nyojō, had composed. The discourse begins with a poem that describes Nyojō's relationship with his own Master, Setchō Chikan. Dōgen uses this poem to comment on the Master-disciple relationship in general, as well as to explore various applications of the metaphor to the functioning of the non-personal Buddha Nature (the Plum Blossom) after the conventional body and mind have dropped off.

The perspective from which Dōgen speaks derives from just such a spiritual experience, which not all of his disciples would have had. How he puts things often bypasses customary modes of discourse wherein one's intellect functions as the final arbiter of meaning. To attempt to explain or 'rationalize' all the allusions in this text would require extensive annotation and would seem counter to Dōgen's intent in the first place. To put it simply, his process of 'boggling the mind' is intended, in part, to liberate his disciples from conventional modes of thinking and to help point them towards their True Nature.

My late Master Tendō, an Old Buddha, was the thirtieth Abbot and a most venerable monk of Keitoku-ji Temple on the renowned Mount Tendō in the Keigen district of Great Sung China. Once when speaking to the assembly he said, "Here at Tendō in midwinter have come forth the first lines of a verse." He then recited the following poem of his:

The thorn-like, spike-branched Old Plum Tree
Suddenly bursts forth, first with one or two blossoms,
Then with three, four, five, and finally blossoms beyond count.

No perfume to take pride in, no fragrance to boast of.
In scattering, they evoke a springtime scene as they are blown over grass and trees.
The patch-robed monks, to a one, have no sooner shaved their heads
Than, suddenly, the weather shifts with howling winds and squalling skies,
Until the whole earth is wrapped in swirling snow.
The Old Plum Tree's silhouette is barely to be seen,
As the freezing cold seizes their noses and rubs them raw.

The Old Plum Tree with which he began his talk was a silhouette barely to be seen when It suddenly burst into bloom and bore fruit. Sometimes It brought forth a springtime, sometimes It brought forth a winter. Sometimes It brought forth howling winds, sometimes It brought forth squalling skies. Sometimes It was simply the head of a patch-robed monk, sometimes It was the Eye of my Old Buddha. Sometimes It changed into grass and trees; sometimes It suddenly changed into a pure fragrance. Its sudden spiritual transformations and spiritually wondrous ways were inexhaustible, even up to the point where the great earth and the high heavens, along with the luminous sun and the pure moon, were functioning like trees, due to the arboreal merits of the Old Plum Tree, as they—Master and disciple—entwined around and supported each other, like the vines of kudzu and wisteria do.

At the time when the Old Plum Tree burst into bloom, Its flowering characterized the world. Whenever Its flowering characterizes the world, that is what we call 'the arrival of spring'. On that occasion, there is a single blossom of five petals that bursts forth. At the time of this single blossom, there can be three, or four, or five blossoms, or there can be a hundred, or a thousand, or myriad blossoms, right up to there being countless blossoms. These blossomings forth are nothing compared to the one or two or countless boughs that the Old Plum Tree can boast of. Flowers such as the udumbara and the blue lotus are like one or two branchings of the Old Plum Tree's blossoming.[1] All blossomings, in general, are beneficent gifts of the Old Plum Tree. There is the Old Plum Tree of common folk and the Old Plum Tree of those in loftier realms. And from within the Old Plum Tree, both the ordinary human realms and the realms of the more lofty manifest,

1. The udumbara flower is said to bloom only once every three thousand years. For this reason it is used in Buddhism as a metaphor for how difficult it is to come into contact with the True Teaching. The blue lotus is a metaphor for wise discernment and one's victory over slavery to the senses.

due to the merits of the Tree. We call the hundreds and thousands of blossoms the flowering of ordinary people and of those in loftier realms; the thousands of millions of blossoms are the flowering of Buddhas and Ancestors. At this very moment in time the blossoms cry out, "A Buddha has appeared in the world!" and they cry out "From the first, the Ancestral Master Bodhidharma came to this very land of ours!"

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My late Master, an Old Buddha, once addressed his assembly in verse:

When Gautama finally lost His deceiving eyes,[2]
There appeared in the snow a single blossom on one bough of the Old Plum Tree.
What has now arrived is the growing of thorn-like spurs,
So that all the more I laugh at the spring winds which send all things flying in disarray.

Now that this Old Buddha has turned the Wheel of the Dharma to Its full throughout the whole universe, it has created an opportunity for all ordinary folk, as well as those in lofty positions, to realize the Way. There is nothing that has not been covered with the benefits of the Dharma, even including clouds and rain, winds and water, plants and insect life. The heavens and the earth, along with their domains, having been set in motion by this Wheel of the Dharma, are like fish freely and vigorously swimming about in water. When people say, "I am hearing words that I have not heard before," they are saying, "I am listening to the Dharma of the present moment." When they say, "I am getting what I did not have before," they are giving a name to their realizing the Dharma of the present moment. In short, His Wheel of the Dharma cannot be seen or heard without there being at least a vague feeling of happiness and prosperity.

In and about the hundred and eighty provinces within Great Sung China today, there are temples in the mountains and in populated areas whose number is beyond reckoning. Within them, the number of trainees is great. But most of them never met my late Master, the Old Buddha. Further, only a small percentage of those who had met him actually heard what he had to say. And even more, how could there possibly be many who had a one-to-one meeting with him and made their prostrations to him?[3] And those permitted in his private quarters were fewer

2. Gautama, Prince Siddhārtha's family name, is customarily used to refer to Shakyamuni Buddha before His enlightenment.

3. That is, became his disciples.

still, to say nothing of those who were permitted to do prostrations to my late Master's Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow, Countenance and Eye.

My late Master, the Old Buddha, did not readily allow new monks to stay in the monastery. He would often say, "Those who are unfamiliar with the mind that seeks the Way cannot dwell here with me," and then he'd send them on their way. Once rid of them, he would say, "If they are not 'such a one',* what, pray, do they want to achieve? Dogs like that are noisy beings. They are not permitted in the monastery." I have actually witnessed this and personally heard him say that. In private, I thought to myself, "What could they possibly have done wrong that even though they are his countrymen, he would not allow them to dwell with him? By what good fortune have I been permitted to enter his monastery, even though I am an alien seed from a distant foreign land? And further, I have been allowed to have free access to the Abbot's private quarters that I might do prostrations to his venerable body and listen to his words of Dharma. Though I am foolish and ignorant, I have been able to form a fruitful bond with him."

At the time when my late Master was doing his part to transform the worldly ways of Sung China, there were people who were able to explore the Matter,* as well as those who were not able to do so. Now that my late Master, the Old Buddha, has departed from the world of Sung China, it has probably become even more dismal than a moonless night. And why is that? I would simply answer, "Because around the time of my late Master, an Old Buddha, there were no Old Buddhas like my late Master, the Old Buddha." Thus, when you trainees of today encounter and hear what he said in his poems, do not think that other countrymen of yours are able to encounter and heed the Wheel of the Dharma and thereby explore the Matter with a Master. The Plum Blossom in the snow is a single glimpse of the udumbara flower. How often does it happen in everyday life that, while looking respectfully at the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching of the Buddha Tathagata, we vainly fail to break into a smile when His eyes twinkle? Right now, beyond doubt, we have already had authentically Transmitted to us—and affirmed for us—that the Plum Blossom in the snow is the very Eye of the Tathagata. Taking this up, some may take the Eye to mean a painted eye on a forehead or the pupil within an organ of sight. But when we get inside the Plum Blossom through our training and completely investigate It, such dubious explanations do not come forth any longer. This is the very Eye of the statement, "In the heavens above and the earth below, I alone am the Honored One."[4]

4. This quotation is attributed to the Buddha who, upon His birth, is said to have taken seven steps and then uttered these words. However, as the discourse states, it was Gautama's Eye

Thus it is that the celestial flowers in the world of the heavens and the celestial flowers in the world of humans—coral tree flowers and great coral tree flowers, as well as the red manjusha tree flowers and great red manjusha tree flowers—along with flowers that are kindred to innumerable lands within the ten quarters, are all the kith and kin of the Plum Blossom in the snow. Because they have received a portion of the beneficence of the Plum Blossom, millions of blossoms are the kin of the Plum Blossom and should, therefore, be called miniature plum blossoms. Illusory flowers in the sky, earthbound flowers, flowerings within the mind of meditation, and so on, are all large and small flowers that are kindred to the Plum Blossom. The flowers that have opened within the millions of domains within the Flower are all a portion of the beneficence of this Plum Blossom.[5] Apart from the beneficence of the Plum Blossom, there is not a single raindrop or dewdrop of beneficence. The bloodlines of all who have flowered have come forth from the Plum Blossom. Do not explore the statement "The whole earth was wrapped in swirls of snow" as something that occurred only at Shōrin-ji Monastery. That snow was the Eye of the Tathagata, which shone upon Eka's head and under his feet.[6] Do not merely explore it as what the snow of 'a snow-covered shrine in the snow-capped Himalayan Mountains' refers to. It was the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching for Old Gautama,[7] for in that place He fully realized the opening of the five eyes.[8] The eyes of the Thousand-eyed One would have been completely fulfilled within these five eyes of His.[9]

Truly, there was not one smidgen of the Real Form of all thoughts and things that Old Gautama did not fully realize within the luminous brilliance of His body and mind. Even though the views of ordinary people and those in lofty positions have differences, and even though the feelings of the mundane and the saintly

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(Buddha Nature) that made the statement. That is, the 'I' in the quote does not refer to a personal self. It is Buddha Nature Itself that is making the claim.

5. 'The Flower' is an allusion to the multi-petaled lotus that opens upon the crown of the Tathagata's head, in the center of which sits Vairochana Buddha, that is, the Cosmic Buddha.

6. The reference here is to the Second Chinese Ancestor Eka, who stood all night in the deepening snow outside Bodhidharma's quarters while seeking to be Bodhidharma's disciple.

7. A reference to Gautama doing His training in the Himalayan Mountains.

8. 'The five eyes' refers to Gautama's two physical eyes, which are the non-worldly eyes of someone who is in meditation, plus the Eye of wise discernment, the Eye of the Dharma, and the Eye of a Buddha.

9. 'The Thousand-eyed One' refers to the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara of the Thousand Eyes and the Thousand Hands, who is the embodiment of the compassion of Vairochana Buddha.

stand far apart, the vast expanse of snow is what the earth is, and the earth itself is a vast expanse of snow. If there were no vast expanse of snow, there would be no Earth anywhere within the universe. The whole of this vast expanse of snow—inside and out—is synonymous with these eyes of Old Gautama.[10]

You need to realize that both the Flower and the Earth are completely beyond birth and death. The Flower is beyond birth and death, and because the Flower is beyond birth and death, the Earth is beyond birth and death. Because both Flower and Earth are completely beyond birth and death, the Eye is beyond birth and death. What is called 'beyond birth and death' is synonymous with supreme enlightenment. What is seen at that very instant of enlightenment is simply a Plum Blossom branch. What is expressed at that very moment is simply 'a Plum Blossom bough in the snow'. Both Earth and Flower are Life that transcends life.

Further, the phrase 'the vast expanse of snow' means the vast expanse of snow totally, inside and out. The whole universe is one's Original Mind. Because Original Mind is what the flowers in the whole universe feel, the whole universe is the Plum Blossom. Because the universe is the Plum Blossom, the whole universe is synonymous with the eyes of Gautama. What they perceive at the moment of understanding is the Great Earth with Its mountains and rivers. Arriving at the Matter, arriving at the Moment, is synonymous with Bodhidharma's poem, which is an expression of what has been arrived at:

> *From the first, I came to this land to Transmit the Dharma*
> *That I might rescue deluded beings,*
> *And when the Single Blossom opened Its five petals,*
> *The fruit thereof naturally came about of itself.*

Even though there was his coming from the West and his barely arriving in the East, nevertheless the Plum Blossom was 'the Now' of what arrived.

Bodhidharma's manifesting 'the Now' like this is called 'the growing of thorn-like spurs'. Now at this very moment, there are old branches and new branches on large limbs, which has resulted in places where old twigs and new twigs are on small branchings. You need to explore the places wherein these have arrived, and explore 'arrival' as meaning 'the Now'. 'What is within three, four, five, six blossoms' means 'what is within countless blossoms'. The Flower is equipped with internal meritorious functions that are profound and far-reaching,

10. That is, what one sees before spiritually awakening is the product of the intellect's interpretation of the data from the sense organs.

and It clearly opens up external meritorious functions that are far-reaching and great. Both this 'internal' and 'external' manifest in the blooming of one blossom. Because it is just one bough, there is no other, different one, since it is not one species among others. The One who calls the arrival of the one bough 'the Now' is our Old Fellow Gautama.

Because there is only One Bough, It is what is Transmitted from heir to heir. Hence, it is expressed as "My Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching is what I Transmit to Makakashō," and it is expressed as "You have got what my Marrow is." In this manner, because each heir is a greatly honored and valued life where an arrival has manifested, it is a matter of the five petals opening, for five petals comprise a plum blossom. Thus, there are the Seven Ancestral Buddhas,* and there are the twenty-eight Indian Ancestors and the six Chinese Ancestors up through Enō, plus nineteen other Ancestors.[11] All are the five petals opening on just One Bough; it is just One Bough of five-petaled blossoms. Once you have explored the One Bough and the five petals, you will encounter face-to-face the genuine 'Transmission of the Plum Blossom in the snow' being Transmitted to you. Once you have turned yourself around and turned your mind around within the way that the words 'only One Bough' relate to each other, 'clouds' and 'moon' are what are equal, whereas 'valleys' and 'mountains' are different from each other.

However, folks who have never had an Eye for exploring the Matter are wont to say, "What the five petals means is that there is the one flower which is comprised of the First Chinese Ancestor Bodhidharma plus the subsequent five generations of Chinese-born Ancestors, and because the line-up of the five transcends past and present, before and after, we speak of them as the five petals." These words are not even worth taking up and refuting. These folks, sad to say, are not sentient beings who explore the Matter with Buddhas or train with Ancestors. How could the saying 'one flower comprised of five petals' possibly be limited to just these five generations? Are those who have come after the Sixth Ancestor not to be spoken of? What such folks have to say does not even come up to the prattle of little children. It is something they don't see or hear about even in their dreams.

11. As traditionally counted, the six Chinese Ancestors would be Bodhidharma down through Enō. As to the nineteen subsequent Ancestors, which are not specifically identified as being Chinese, some scholars understand the nineteenth to refer to Nyojō, but by actual count he would be the seventeenth. Dōgen's Dharma heir, Kōun Ejō, would be the nineteenth, which may be why Dōgen does not identify the nineteen as being specifically Chinese.

❀

My late Master, the Old Buddha, once said as his salutary poem that followed his formal Dharma talk on a New Year's Day:

On this first day of the year I wish you happiness.
All the myriad things arising are fresh and new.
Upon reflection, my great assembly, I submit to you,
The Plum Tree has blossomed early this spring.

When I quietly reflect upon this poem, I realize that even if you dear old veteran monks in all ten quarters within the three periods of time have let go of your bodies, if you have no equivalent of "The Plum Tree has blossomed early this spring," who would say that you have expressed the Matter fully? My late Master alone, the Old Buddha, was the Old Buddha among Old Buddhas.

The fundamental meaning of what he said was that once the Plum has blossomed, a myriad springtimes are quick to follow its lead. The myriad springtimes are but one or two of the meritorious functions of the Plum Tree. Just one springtime can make the myriad things that arise into something fresh and new, and make our myriad thoughts and things into a New Year's Day.

His wish for our happiness denotes the authenticity of his Eye. 'The myriad things that arise' are not only of the past, present, and future, they are what existed before the Lords of Awe-inspiring Voices and what will come after the future. Because he is saying that the past, present, and future, which are immeasurable and inexhaustible, are ever fresh, this freshness has dropped off 'freshness'. Thus, what he reflected on and submitted was his wish for his great assembly, because what he wished was that each of them might be 'such a person'.

❀

My late Master Tendō, the Old Buddha, during a Dharma talk for his assembly, once said in verse:

If a single word accords with the Truth,
It will not change, though myriad generations pass:
Thus, eye-shaped willow buds sprout forth from new branches,
Whereas plum blossoms fill up the older boughs.[12]

12. In this section of the discourse, 'willows' refers to those who are new to training, for whom all is new and who are 'all eyes', whereas the plum tree refers to a Master whose years of training, like old boughs, have brought forth a profusion of blossoms.

That is to say, pursuing the Way for hundreds of eons is, from beginning to end, equivalent to a single word according with the Truth, and the effort of one moment's thought is, from before to after, the same as its not changing, though myriad generations pass. The willow brings about a luxuriant growth of new branches and contrives 'eyes' to burst out upon them; even though the branches are new, it is 'eyes' that they bring forth. The principle is that the 'eyes' are nothing other than 'eyes', and we thoroughly explore these branches as being new. The 'new' should be explored through your training as meaning "Everything is all new." To say that plum blossoms fill up the older boughs means that Plum Blossoms are entirely old boughs, that They permeate old boughs, that the old boughs are Plum Blossoms. For example, plum boughs explore the Matter just as willow branches do; plum boughs come into being just as willow branches do; plum boughs are filled up, just as willow branches are. Because plum boughs are filled up with bloomings, just as willow branches are, this is the same as saying, "I have the True Teaching which I Transmit to Makakashō." The countenance of the One filled the countenance of the other with His raising the Flower aloft: the flowering of the one filled the flowering of the Other by his breaking into a smile.

❀

My late Master, the Old Buddha, in formally addressing his assembly, once said in verse:

> *The riverside willows look as though adorned with a minister's waist sash:*
> *The plum blossoms look as though clad in an archer's gauntlet.*[13]

This gauntlet is not like some fine brocade from Szechwan Province or like Pien-ho's priceless jewel:[14] it is simply the opening of a Plum Blossom. The opening of a Plum Blossom is equivalent to 'you whom my Marrow has gotten'.[15]

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13. On a literal level, this verse describes the way the dark branches of the budding willow and the bright blossoming plum tree look.

14. Pien-ho was a person in ancient China who offered to three rulers a huge, unpolished jewel that he had found, but none of these rulers were able to perceive its intrinsic value, and they therefore summarily rejected the offering.

15. "You whom my Marrow has gotten" is Dōgen's reversal of the words Bodhidharma spoke to Eka when confirming him as a Dharma heir: "You have gotten what my Marrow is."

❀

Once, when King Prasenajit invited the Venerable Pindola to a midday meal, the king asked him afterwards, "I have been given to understand that you, O Venerable One, have actually met the Buddha. Is this true?"[16]

The Venerable One pointed to the Matter by using his hand to raise his eyebrow.

Concerning this, my Late Master, the Old Buddha, composed a poem:

Raising his own eyebrow as response to the question, he laughed,
Showing without guile that he had 'encountered Buddha' in a familiar way.
For which he deserves gratitude from the four quarters up to this very day.
The Spring occurs within the twigs of the Plum, which, wrapped in snow, are ever so cold.

This story is about King Prasenajit once asking a Venerable One whether he had or had not actually met the Buddha. 'Encountering Buddha' means becoming a Buddha, and 'becoming a Buddha' means using one's hand to raise an eyebrow. If the Venerable One had merely realized some fruit of arhathood and were not a full-fledged arhat,* he could not have encountered Buddha. If he had not encountered Buddha, he could not have become Buddha. If he had not become Buddha, he would probably not have used his hand to raise an eyebrow, signaling that he had realized Buddhahood.

Accordingly, you need to keep in mind that, as a disciple who had received the Face-to-Face Transmission of Shakyamuni Buddha and as one who had already experienced the fourth fruit of arhathood and was awaiting his rebirth in the world as a present-day Buddha,[17] how could the Venerable One possibly not have encountered Shakyamuni Buddha? 'Having met Shakyamuni Buddha' does not mean 'encountering Buddha'. As you explore this through your training, understand that to encounter Shakyamuni Buddha as Shakyamuni Buddha is

16. As used in the translation of this section of the discourse, 'to meet the Buddha' means having had a social contact with the historical Shakyamuni, whereas 'to encounter Buddha' means having seen one's own Buddha Nature.

17. The fourth fruit of arhathood refers to the results experienced from attaining the fourth stage of arhathood. Please see the *Glossary* for an explanation of these four stages.

'encountering Buddha'. In that King Prasenajit was able to open his eyes to exploring, he had come in contact with one who skillfully used his hand to raise an eyebrow. You simply need to have the Eye of a Buddha to explore the principle underlying 'having encountered Buddha in a familiar way'. This Spring, of which my Master spoke, is beyond humankind, beyond the domains of a Buddha; It is within the twigs of the Plum Tree. How do we know this is so? Because the chill of the snow is the raising of an eyebrow.

❀

My late Master, the Old Buddha, once said in verse,

Our Original Countenance is beyond birth and death.
The Spring is within the blossom of the Plum and has entered a picture.

To paint a picture of Spring, you need not paint willows, or plum trees, or peach trees, or damson trees; you should just portray Spring. To picture willow, plum, peach, or damson is to picture a willow tree, a plum tree, a peach tree, or a damson tree; it is not yet portraying Spring. It is not that Spring should not be portrayed, but apart from my late Master, an Old Buddha, there is no one within India in the west and China to the east who has portrayed Spring. Only my late Master, the Old Buddha, and he alone, had sharp-tipped a brush to portray the Spring. The Spring he spoke about now is the Spring within the picture, because he has put It into the picture. Because he had no need to call upon other abilities, he could simply make a plum blossom be Spring by putting it or its tree into the picture—such were his skillful means.

Due to the clarity of my late Master, the Old Buddha, concerning the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, he Transmitted It to Buddhas and Ancestors who had assembled from all ten quarters over the past, present, and future. Thus it was that he penetrated what the Eye is and clarified what a Plum Blossom is.

On the sixth day of the eleventh lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era in Japan (December 18, 1243), at Kippō-ji Temple in the Yoshida district in Echizen province, where snow, some three feet deep, has wrapped the whole earth in swirling white.

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If perchance some demon of self naturally arises and the Plum Blossom seems not to be the Eye of Gautama, then ponder on the question, "What physical

thing can you see as the Eye that is more apt than the Plum Blossom?" And if at such a time, you search for the Eye somewhere else, then every moment will be your being face-to-face with It and failing to recognize It, because mutual recognition will not have occurred to you as possible. Today is not 'my today', it is the today of our whole tradition. Straight off, you must clarify what the Eye of the Plum Blossom is and seek that, and that alone!

❀

My late Master, the Old Buddha, once said in verse,

Everything is so bright and clear,
No need to seek some phantom in the Flowering Plum,
Spontaneously creating rain and raising clouds in past and present.
Past and present are rare enough, and what ending will they have?

Thus, the creating of rain and the raising of clouds are functions of the Plum Blossom. Floating clouds and falling rain are the Plum Blossom's thousands of twists and turns and myriad masses of forms, as well as Its thousands of merits and myriad virtues. What is naturally ever-present is the Plum Blossom. Thus, we speak of the Plum Blossom as being forever.

❀

The time-honored Meditation Master Hōen once said in verse:

The snow-laden north wind sets the valley trees to swaying.
Everything is buried deep within, with little complaint,
While on the mountain peak, the bright-spirited plum stands alone.
Even before the twelfth month's heavy snows spew forth, I have the feeling of the yearly 'greater cold'.[18]

Thus, without having penetrated what the movements of the Plum Blossom are, it is hard to know what the feeling of the greater cold is. Harmonizing the

18. Traditionally in China, there is a period around early November that is called 'the time of light snow' and, a month later, one called 'the time of heavy snow'. Similarly, a short while after the winter solstice there is a period called 'the time of the lesser cold' and, a month later, one called 'the time of the greater cold'.

meritorious functioning of little bits of the Plum Blossom with the north wind is what has created the snow. Be very clear about this. It is the strength of the Plum Blossom that calls forth the wind, creates the snow, brings order to the year, and brings the valley woodlands, along with all other things, into existence.

The senior monk Taigen Fu expressed his awakening by saying in verse,

I remember from the days before I had awakened
Whenever I heard the wail of the painted horn, it was like
a cry of grief.[19]
Now, when upon my pillow, I have no idle dreams
And just trust to whatever the Plum Blossom may blow
my way, large or small.

Senior monk Fu was originally an academic lecturer. Having been shaken up by the Chief Cook of Mount Kassan, he had a great awakening. This was his Plum Blossom letting the Spring Wind blow as It would, large or small.

19. The painted horn is the name of an ancient Chinese musical instrument.

58

On the Whole Universe in All Ten Directions

(Jippō)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse, depending on context, the Japanese word *'jippō'* is translated in various ways, such as the ten directions, the ten quarters, the ten domains, and the ten worlds, all of which refer to the whole universe not only in a literal, worldly sense but also in a spiritual one.

A Master's making a Fist signifies this whole universe of ours in all its ten directions.[1] This one instance of his manifesting his sincere heart is the whole universe—all ten quarters—in all its splendor. It completely pounds out the marrow from our bones.

❀

Shakyamuni Buddha once proclaimed to His great assembly, "Within the Buddha lands in all ten quarters there is only the Teaching of the One Vehicle and no other." What He calls the ten quarters have produced the Buddha lands and they form the ten quarters. Therefore, unless we choose to make use of the Buddha lands in our training, we will not yet have the ten quarters. Because they are Buddha lands, we have taken the Buddha as our Master. This ordinary worldly country of ours is no different from Shakyamuni Buddha's Land. You need to explore through your training that when someone expresses what this ordinary worldly realm is, it is the six- or eight-foot-tall Buddha lands in all ten quarters, in the same sense that we clearly describe something as weighing either eight ounces or half a pound.[2]

These ten quarters are contained within one single quarter and are contained within one single Buddha, which is why they have manifested as ten quarters. Because they are the ten worlds which is one world, and because they are this very

1. A Master's making a Fist refers to a Chinese Zen Master's raising of his fist to direct a disciple away from a narrow way of thinking in order to have him encompass the whole of the universe, spatially and temporally.

2. That is, we use different terms for the same thing. In short, what we call the ordinary worldly realm is another name for the Buddha lands, depending on our perspective.

world which is both one's own world and the world of the present moment, they are the Eye of the world, the Fist of the world, the supporting pillar of the world, and the stone lantern* of the world. The Buddhas of the ten quarters within these Buddha lands of the ten worlds are not something comparatively larger or smaller, nor are They something pure or sullied. Because of this, all Buddhas on Their own, along with all the Buddhas of the ten quarters, deeply admire and praise each other. Further, They do not slander each other or talk about each other's merits or weaknesses or each other's likes and dislikes as if They were turning the Wheel of the Dharma to express It. As Buddhas and the disciples of Buddhas, They help give rise to spiritual goals by making respectful inquiries.

In receiving the Dharma of the Buddhas and Ancestors, we explore It through our training, just as They do. We do not insult Them, or judge Them as being right or wrong, or say insulting things about Them as do non-Buddhists and the demon hordes. When we open and read the Buddhist Scriptures that have been passed on to China, and look at Shakyamuni Buddha's Teaching over the span of His life, we see that He never spoke of Buddhas in other domains as being inferior or superior to Him, nor did He say that They were not Buddhas. In short, we cannot find in any of the Teaching that He gave in His lifetime a word of His that criticized any Buddha.

Thus it was that Shakyamuni Buddha once addressed His great assembly, saying, "I, on My own, have come to know how It appears, as every Buddha in the ten quarters has also done."[3] You need to know that the appearance referred to in His statement "I, on My own, have come to know how It appears" is the appearance of That which is fully perfected. The appearance of perfection is, as the saying goes, "This cane of bamboo is on the tall side whereas that cane of bamboo is on the short side." The Way of the Buddhas in the ten quarters is synonymous with giving full expression to the saying, "I, on My own, have come to know how It appears, which was the same for Shakyamuni Buddha." It is "I, on My own, have awakened to this appearance, and Buddhas in Their own domains are also like this." It is the way 'I' appears, the way 'knowing' appears, the way 'this' appears, the way 'all' appears, the way 'this ordinary worldly country of ours' appears, the way 'Shakyamuni Buddha' appears.

The underlying principle of this is what the Buddhist Scriptures give voice to. The Buddhas, along with Their Buddha lands, are beyond duality, beyond being

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* See *Glossary.*

3. In this discourse, the various forms of the word 'appearance' carry the meaning of 'the form that something takes'.

sentient or nonsentient, beyond being deluded or enlightened, beyond being good, bad, or neutral, beyond being pure or sullied, beyond being something created and beyond being something permanently abiding, beyond yearning for things and beyond there being nothing to yearn for, beyond permanence and impermanence, beyond existence and non-existence, and beyond self. They are apart from the four phrases—there is existence, there is no existence, there is both existence and non-existence, and there is neither existence nor non-existence—as well as apart from the one hundred ways of negating. They are simply nothing other than the ten quarters, nothing other than the Buddha lands. Thus, the ten quarters are nothing other than what they are, just as we humans are: we have heads but no tails.

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Meditation Master Chōsa Keishin, when addressing his assembly, once said, "The whole universe in all ten directions is nothing other than the discerning Eye of a mendicant monk." What is being spoken of now is the discerning Eye of Gautama. The discerning Eye of mendicant monk Gautama is synonymous with 'the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is what I have'. Even though It is Transmitted to whomever, It is still mendicant monk Gautama's discerning Eye. The whole universe, all sharp-edged and raggle-taggle in all its ten quarters, is Gautama's very organ of sight. This whole universe in all ten quarters is the One Eye among the mendicant monk's eyes, and up and beyond this, He has ever so many eyes.[4]

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> "'The whole universe in all ten directions' is a term that a mendicant monk is accustomed to."[5]

'Accustomed to' means 'familiar with'. Among words in common use in Japan, it would be described as 'everyday'. So, 'the whole universe in all ten directions' is an everyday phrase in a mendicant monk's spiritual family. Its words are accurate and the phrase itself is accurate. Clearly, you need to explore through your training the underlying principle that everyday words are the whole universe in all ten directions, and therefore 'the whole universe in all ten directions' are everyday words. Because these ten directions are inexhaustible, they are the ten quarters in

4. An allusion to the thousand-armed Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva, personification of the all-seeing, all-helping compassion of Buddha Nature.

5. This is the first of five statements that Dōgen quotes. He then supplies a commentary after each.

their entirety. We use these words in their ordinary, familiar sense. It is like seeking for a horse, seeking for salt, seeking for water, seeking for a drinking vessel, or like offering a drinking vessel, offering water, offering salt, offering a horse.[6] Who would know that an awakened one, one whose perspective is beyond duality, has transformed his body and transformed his mental functioning within the stream of his words, for he has transformed his speech within the stream of his words? The accuracy of his words and the straightforwardness of his speech, which gives a mouth to the oceans and a tongue to the mountains, has an everyday familiarity. Thus, even were we to cover his mouth and blanket our ears, what he expressed about the ten quarters would still be true.

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> "The whole universe in all ten quarters is the whole body of a mendicant monk."

With one hand pointing towards the heavens, the Buddha showed what the heavens are and, with the other hand pointing towards the earth, He showed what the earth is, for this is the way things are. Even so, He said, "In the heavens above and the earth below, I alone am the Honored One." This is the whole universe in all ten directions, which is the whole body of a mendicant monk. The crown of his head, his eyes, his nose, his skin and flesh, his bones and marrow, each and every one, is totally the embodiment of a mendicant monk, one who has clarified and let go of the whole ten quarters of the universe. Without our having to set all the ten quarters into motion, the whole of them are no different for us. Without depending on the fictions constructed by the intellective mind, we come to realize the body of a mendicant monk as the whole universe in all ten quarters and view the whole universe in all ten quarters as comprising the body of a mendicant monk.

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> "The whole universe in all ten quarters is what our radiantly luminous True Self is."

What we call 'the True Self' is our Nose before 'father' and 'mother' were born.[7]

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6. The significance of what is sought and what is offered is the topic of Discourse 79: On 'The King Requests Something from Sindh' *(Ō Saku Sendaba)*. It concerns a certain king whose servants could anticipate their master's desires without his having to specifically say what he wanted at any given moment.

7. "Our Nose before 'father' and 'mother' were born" is a Zen expression for one's innate

When we mistake what our True Self is, we call whatever comes to hand 'the whole universe in all ten directions'. Despite that, the emerging of the True Self is the spiritual question manifesting before our very eyes. It is our opening the Buddha Hall and encountering Buddha. At the same time, it is someone else exchanging your eyes with black nuts from a soapberry tree.[8] Be that as it may, you will precipitously encounter the Great Master. Further, it is easy to call to That One, but it is difficult to do what is asked. Even so, when we hear the call, we turn our head. Of what use is it to go through the motions of arbitrarily turning our head? It is That One who makes our head turn. But when there is rice that is going uneaten and a robe that is going unworn, even though you are like someone groping about who has not yet made contact with That One, I shall, for pity's sake, deal you thirty blows.[9]

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"The whole universe in all ten quarters resides within the radiant luminosity of our True Self."

The eyelid of the Eye is taken for the radiant luminosity of the True Self. Its sudden opening is taken for something that resides within. What is seen as residing in the Eye is what people call 'the whole universe in all ten quarters'. However, though there are people who speak in this manner, only those who lie down in the same bed actually see where the bedding is shot through with holes.[10]

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"In the whole universe in all ten quarters, there is not one single person who is not the True Self."

Accordingly, among each and every trainer of novices and each and every Fist, there is not one who is not a True Self, just as the ten quarters are. Because they are their True Self, each and every one of these True Selves is the ten quarters. The ten quarters of each and every one of these True Selves delimits what the ten quarters

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Buddha Nature prior to the first arising of the discriminating mind which separates things into opposites such as 'father' and 'mother'.

8. That is, one's voracious eyes are replaced by eyes that have a cleansing effect on self and others.

9. Uneaten rice refers to someone passing up the opportunity to ingest the Dharma; an unworn robe refers to someone who passes up the opportunity to adhere to the Precepts.

10. That is, only those who have awakened share the same insight as to the nature of things.

are on a deep and intimate level. Because the lifeline of each and every True Self is in the hands of the True Self, each repays the original cost of his or her straw sandals.[11] Now, why is it that the Eye of Bodhidharma and the Nose of Gautama are newly born from within the Womb of some pillar* of the temple? It is because, as they say, they freely come into, and go out of, the ten quarters in all ten directions.

❀

Gensha Shibi once said, "The whole universe throughout all its ten directions is the One Bright Pearl." You need to clearly recognize the converse, which is that the One Bright Pearl is the whole universe throughout all its ten directions. Those with heads of gods as well as those with faces of demons take It to be their cavernous dwelling place, whereas the Dharma heirs of the Buddhas and Ancestors take It to be Their Eye. Ordinary folk take It to be the crown of their head or their own fists. Those with a beginner's heart and those who are present-day trainees take It to be their donning the kesa* and their eating rice.[12] My late Master made It into mudballs which he would use to pelt both those junior to him and those senior to him.[13] Further, even though this was just like placing a stone on a *Go* board, he would customarily be scraping out the eyes of those in our Ancestral tradition.[14] When he was scraping them out, not only would our Ancestors lend him a hand at it, but a radiance would stream out from within their Eye.

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> The venerable monk Kempō was once asked by a monk, "A certain Scripture says, 'The World-honored Ones in the ten quarters are on one and the same road that leads to the gateway to nirvana,' but, I wonder, where does that road begin?"
>
> Kempō took his traveling staff and drew a circle, saying, "It is in here."

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11. That is, a monastic earns his or her keep by ceaselessly doing the training wholeheartedly.
12. 'Donning the kesa' refers to living by the Precepts, whereas 'eating rice' refers to ingesting the Dharma.
13. The principle is that if the Master pelts trainees with sufficient Teaching, sooner or later some of it will 'stick', like mudballs.
14. That is, he would help remove their worldly way of looking at things so that the Truth could shine through their Eye.

His words, "It is in here," refer to the ten quarters. What he calls a 'World-honored One' is a veritable traveling staff.* 'Traveling staffs' are what is 'in here'. 'The one road' refers to the ten quarters. However, do not try to hide your staff in Gautama's nose. Do not try to stick your traveling staff into the nostrils of one who is a traveling staff. Even if you are acting in that way, do not conclude that the Old Fellow Kempō had already finished stewing on "The World-honored Ones in the ten quarters are on one and the same road that leads to the gateway to nirvana." He only speaks of it as 'being right here', but that doesn't mean that his 'being right here' is in some way deficient. If Old Fellow Kempō, right from the start, was not being deceived by his traveling staff, then well and good for him.

In sum, just explore through your training that living noses are the ten quarters.

Delivered to the assembly on the thirteenth day of the eleventh lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (December 25, 1243) in Echizen Province at Kippō-ji Monastery.

Copied on the twenty-fourth day of the year's end in the third year of the Kangen era (January 14, 1246), whilst in the quarters of the Abbot's assistant at Daibutsu-ji Temple in Echizen Province.

Ejō

59

On Encountering Buddha

(Kembutsu)

Translator's Introduction: The Japanese word that Dōgen chose for the title appears with great frequency throughout this discourse and has numerous possibilities for translation, including to see Buddha, to meet Buddha, to encounter Buddha, a Buddha, the Buddha, Buddha Nature, one's own Buddha Nature, and someone else's Buddha Nature, among others. English, on the other hand, requires the choice of just one of these at any point in the text. While there are places where context aids in choosing the most likely nuance, there are other places where a translator picks somewhat more randomly from the list of possibilities.

The discourse itself offers some passages that are rather difficult to render into easily comprehendible English, the opening section being a case in point. Readers may find it helpful to keep in mind the following point which lies at the heart of what Dōgen is talking about: there is That which transcends all that we perceive to be appearing or arising, and that That is in no way excluded from what we perceive, as It encompasses both what appears (has form) and what does not appear (is beyond form). Hence, there is the way that things appear, which is what we perceive the world to be, and then there is That which transcends the forms that comprise our world. That which transcends these forms is, at the same time, not separate from them. Thus, appearance is part and parcel with what is Real. In more concrete terms, the That is synonymous with Buddha Nature.

Shakyamuni Buddha, in addressing His great assembly, once said, "When you see all material forms, which are provisional, as being part of That which goes beyond such appearances, you will then be seeing the Tathagata."[1] To see the forms of things and to see That which goes beyond such appearances is a realization experienced bodily, one which will free you from delusion. As a consequence, you will meet the Tathagata.[2] We treat as 'seeing Buddha' the manifestation which the Eye that sees Buddha has already brought forth. The ultimate way by which the Eye sees Buddha refers to the Eye by which we encounter Buddha. When we see Buddha Nature in other places and when we see

1. 'All material forms, which are provisional' refers to all thoughts and things, which arise, persist for a while, disintegrate, and disappear. 'That which goes beyond such appearances' refers to the Buddha Nature which embraces not only all forms in past, present, and future, but also what is not form (the Void). Also, in this discourse, all the quotes Dōgen attributes to Shakyamuni Buddha come from the *Lotus Scripture*.

2. That is, it is a spiritual realization, not an intellectual one.

our own Buddha Nature as being apart from Buddhas, then, even though everything seems to be all tangled up like overgrown vines, we first explore through our training what 'meeting Buddha' means. Then we work on dropping off 'meeting Buddha' until we realize the vital, living state of 'meeting Buddha'. Finally, we make use of our 'having met Buddha'. All of these functions comprise our encountering the Sun-faced Buddha and the Moon-faced Buddha.[3]

To see such Buddhas is to see an endless stream of countenances, bodies and minds, as well as hands and eyes. From the time of our giving rise to our intention to realize Buddhahood and our stepping forth, right up to our doing our daily practice now, all is the Living Eye and the Living Bones and Marrow rushing in to see Buddha. It is our doing our utmost in training to realize the Way until there is no gap between our own enlightenment and that of our Master. As a consequence, the whole realm of self and the whole domain of other—that is, this individual and that individual—are all doing their utmost to see Buddha. Those folks who lack an Eye for exploring the Matter* through training take up the Tathagata's phrases, 'all material forms' and 'That which goes beyond such appearances' and, fancying that the way things appear are not true appearances, imagine that they have encountered the Tathagata. Truly, some of those who are small-minded will take up studying His words like that, but the full realization of the Buddha's intent is not like this. You need to realize that to see the way things appear while concurrently going beyond the matter of how they appear is to forthwith meet the Tathagata. There is the Tathagata within existence and there is the Tathagata that is beyond existence.

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The Great Meditation Master Hōgen of Seiryō-in Monastery once said, "If we see the way things appear as being devoid of form, then we will not see the Tathagata." Now, this saying by Great Master Hōgen expresses his encounter with Buddha. It contains what Hōgen personally said and what his encounter with Buddha imparted. To put the matter in the colloquial, it is like Hōgen and Shakyamuni Buddha coming head-on in competition and extending Their hands to

3. The lifespan of the Sun-faced Buddha is 1,800 years, whereas the lifespan of the Moon-faced Buddha is twenty-four hours. This derives from a kōan story concerning Baso, who, when he was ill, was asked how he felt. He used the reference to the two Buddhas to express how he was experiencing time, which went beyond conventional, calendar measurements, in that his days seemed to drag on while his months seemed to fly by.

* See *Glossary*.

each other in cooperation.[4] You need to listen with your ears to what Hōgen said, and, as to what his encountering Buddha imparted, you need to hear what he is voicing with your Eye. At the same time, those in the past who have explored this underlying principle through their training have said:

> All the ways in which things appear are appearances of the Tathagata. There is no single way in which the Tathagata appears, nor are the appearances of things and the appearance of the Tathagata ever to be confused with each other. And you should not, even provisionally, take these appearances not to be His appearance. Were you to treat them as not being His appearance, you would be as one deserting his father and running away from home.[5]

In other words, what these trainees are habitually saying is, "Because the appearances of things are the appearing of the Tathagata, the way things appear will be just the way things appear." Truly, this is a profound discourse on the Greater Vehicle;* it is what is awakened to in all ten quarters.

You should definitely settle the Matter by taking it on faith and then making it your training. And do not be like threads of gossamer blown hither and thither by every breeze.

"The way things appear is the way the Tathagata appears: He is not separate from form." You should thoroughly explore this statement until you encounter Buddha. Then, having settled the Matter and awakened to faith, you should accept the Teaching given in this statement and, reciting it, thoroughly penetrate its meaning. In this manner you should not let there be any time when your own eyes and ears are not observing and hearkening to it, or when you are not dropping off your own body and mind, bones and marrow, or when you are not letting go of your own self-created world with its mountains and rivers, for this is the daily behavior of Buddhas and Ancestors for exploring the Way through Their training. Do not think that because it is your own way of putting things, it could not possibly bring clarity to your own eyes. Turned around by one word of your own, you may see yourself dropping off your own concept of what Buddhas and Ancestors are, for such is the everyday Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

Hence, there is only one way to explore the Matter: 'the way that all things appear' has already gone beyond their not having appeared, and 'That which

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4. That is, the two of them are saying the same thing but in different ways.

5. An allusion to a parable in the *Lotus Scripture*, found in the fourth chapter entitled "Belief and Understanding", which describes how we spend so much of our lives running away from the Tathagata.

transcends what appears' is synonymous with the appearance of all things. Because That which transcends appearances is not separate from appearances, That which transcends appearances truly goes beyond what has appeared. You need to explore through your training that the appearance that is referred to as 'That which transcends appearances' and the appearance that is referred to as 'the way all things appear' are both the way that the Tathagata appears. Within what we are exploring there are the two Scriptural interpretations: that of going to visit Buddha and seeing Him, and that of going to visit Buddha and not seeing Him. These are what we explore with our vital Eye. If your Eye has not yet manifested in order to look at these Scriptural interpretations, yours will not be the Eye of thorough enlightenment. If It is not the Eye of thorough enlightenment, you have not encountered Buddha. In encountering Buddha, there is what is seen as form and what is seen as being beyond form: it is "I do not understand the Buddha Dharma."[6] In not encountering Buddha, there is what is not seen as form and what is not seen as being beyond form: it is what people who intellectually understand the Buddha Dharma have attained. This is what Hōgen's previously quoted statement is getting at, which demonstrates his realization of eighty or ninety percent of the Matter.[7] At the same time, in regard to the One Great Matter, we may say, "When you see all forms as the True Form, then you will straight off encounter the Tathagata." Such statements as this are entirely due to the influence of Shakyamuni Buddha: it is not the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of any other person.

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At that time when Shakyamuni Buddha was residing on Vulture Peak, He once addressed His great assembly through Bhaisajya Rājā, the Bodhisattva* Lord of Healing, speaking in verse:

If we are on intimate terms with a Dharma Master,
We will surely arrive at the Bodhisattva Path.
If we learn by faithfully following this Master,
We will surely catch sight of Buddhas as numberless as
the Ganges' grains of sand.

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6. The quotation is by Daikan Enō and refers to his not being content with having just an intellectual understanding of Buddha Dharma.

7. In Zen stories, realizing the Truth short of a hundred percent is not a negative judgment but actually high praise, as it expresses that someone has a more profound understanding than just what has been voiced.

'Being on intimate terms with a Dharma Master' resembles the Second Chinese Ancestor Eka's attending on Bodhidharma for eight years, after which he got his Master's Marrow with his whole arm, and it is like Nangaku's training in the Way for fifteen years. Getting the Marrow of one's Teacher is what we mean by 'being on intimate terms'. 'The Bodhisattva Path' is synonymous with "I am also like this, and you are also like this."[8] It is straightaway attaining the innumerable daily tangles that go along with Buddhist practice.

'Straightaway attaining' does not mean acquiring all that has been manifested from ancient times up to now, nor does it mean giving rise to some experience that has never arisen before, nor does it mean consciously grasping what is unbounded in the present; 'straightaway attaining' means dropping off the notion of acquiring intimacy. Thus, all attaining is straightaway attaining. 'What we learn by faithfully following our Master' means following in ancient footsteps as his attendant, something that we need to thoroughly explore. At the very moment when we do our daily Buddhist practice, we can realize what a Master can see. At that moment, it is our seeing Buddhas as innumerable as the sands of the Ganges River. "Buddhas as numberless as the Ganges' grains of sand" are just the moments when we are freely functioning, like fish darting about through water.[9] Do not keep chasing after seeing Buddhas as numberless as the Ganges' grains of sand by fawning on your Master. What you should do first off is strive to follow the teachings of your Master, for by following them you will attain the perspective of a Buddha.

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Shakyamuni Buddha, in addressing all who were experiencing a genuine state of awakening, said in verse:

Having profoundly entered into a state of meditative concentration,
We see Buddhas in all directions.

The whole universe is profound because it is the Buddha Lands of the Ten Quarters. It is not broad, nor large, nor small, nor narrow. When we act, we act by following it. We call this meditative state 'complete absorption'. This is not seven

8. This quotation is part of a dialogue between Nangaku and his Master Enō, in which the latter speaks of being freed from stain, a condition that he equates with being one with the Buddhas and Ancestors.

9. That is, when we act like a Buddha, at that moment we are a Buddha, and we see all as Buddhas.

feet or eight feet, nor is it ten feet. It is encapsulated in the one phrase 'entered into', that is, it is complete absorption, without anything being left outside. This 'profoundly entered into' refers to meditative concentration, whereas 'having profoundly entered into meditative concentration' means 'to see Buddhas in all directions'. Because we have reached this state by profoundly entering That Place where no one can reach us, we see Buddhas in all directions. No matter what someone may try to distract us with, we would not chase after it and, as a result, Buddhas will manifest everywhere throughout the ten quarters. The state of 'entering profoundly' cannot manifest itself for a very long time. 'Seeing Buddhas in all directions' is simply Jōshū's seeing his Master Nansen as a reclining Tathagata.[10] And 'meditative concentration' is beyond something to be 'gotten into' or 'gotten out of'. In our leaping beyond any doubt or fear of the True Dragon, at that very moment when we see Buddha we will not radiate uncertainty. Because we encounter myriad Buddhas by our having encountered Buddha, we profoundly enter myriad states of meditative concentration by our having entered a state of meditative concentration. The underlying principle of such things as 'meditative concentration', 'seeing Buddha', and 'entering profoundly' was not something made up by people in the past who were leisurely in their efforts and then foisted it off to present-day folks. Nor is it some new, present-day item, for such an underlying principle is invariable. All instances of Transmitting the Way and accepting the Precepts have been like this. Exploring the Matter and obtaining Its fruits are also like this.

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Shakyamuni Buddha once addressed Samantabhadra,* the Bodhisattva of Universal Goodness, saying:

> If there are any who accept and keep to these words of Mine on the flowering of the Dharma, who read or recite them, accurately remember them, put them into practice, or make copies of them, know that such persons have encountered Shakyamuni Buddha just as truly as if they had heard what was said directly from the Buddha's mouth.[11]

In general, all Buddhas say that to encounter Shakyamuni Buddha and to become Shakyamuni Buddha is to realize enlightenment and to realize Buddhahood. This

10. Dōgen recounts the story of Nansen's first meeting with Jōshū, from which this image is derived, in Discourse 34: On the Cypress Tree *(Hakujushi)*, pp. 474–475.

11. 'These words of Mine on the flowering of the Dharma' is a reference to the *Lotus Scripture*.

realization by Buddhas has, from the first, been made possible by Their doing these seven acts: accepting, keeping to, reading, reciting, remembering, putting into practice, and making copies of what the Buddha said. Anyone who performs these seven acts is 'one of those persons' whom we should by all means undertake to know: they are 'such a one',* just as he or she truly is. Because this is how we encounter Shakyamuni Buddha, hearing His words being recited is just like hearing the Buddha speak directly to us. Shakyamuni Buddha has been Shakyamuni Buddha ever since He encountered Shakyamuni Buddha. Thus, His eloquent tongue has enfolded the three-thousandfold world far and wide. What mountain or ocean would not be a Scripture of the Buddha? This is why 'such a person' who copies down His words encounters Shakyamuni Buddha face-to-face. The Buddha's mouth has always been open throughout myriad ancient times, so on what occasion has there not been His voicing of Scriptures? Thus, only those who accept and keep to what He has expressed may encounter Shakyamuni Buddha. The meritorious functioning of the sense organs of such persons will be no different from this. And what is before and what after, what is to the right and what to the left, what is given and what taken, as well as whatever constitutes one's daily attitude of mind, will also be no different. How can we fail to rejoice in having been born in a time when we have met this Scriptural Teaching of His, which permits us to encounter Shakyamuni Buddha? It is our having been born to meet Shakyamuni Buddha. Those who are diligent in body and mind, and have accepted and kept to these words of His on the flowering of the Dharma, have read or recited them, have accurately remembered them, have put them into practice, or have made copies of them, all such persons will consequently encounter Shakyamuni Buddha. Hearing these Scriptural words of His being recited is just like hearing the Buddha speak directly to us, so who would not be eager to hear them? Those who feel no compunction to be the best that they can be are human beings who are truly poverty stricken and lacking in good fortune and astuteness. Those who do their exploring and training are among 'those persons' whom we should by all means undertake to know, for, by doing so, we will consequently come to see Shakyamuni Buddha.

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Shakyamuni Buddha, when addressing His assembly, once said:

> If you good men and women, upon hearing Me say that My life is immeasurably long, trust in what I say and awaken to it with a heart that is profoundly seeking, then you will see the Buddha as constantly existing on Vulture Peak, surrounded by His Bodhisattvas and

> shravakas, giving voice to the Dharma.[12] And you will see this everyday world as bedecked with lapis lazuli, ever calm, just, and proper.

This 'mind that is profoundly seeking' is our everyday world. Who, pray, would not trust in and thereby awaken to the Buddha's words that are so true and real? Your encountering these Scriptural words of His is an opportunity for you to trust in Them so as to awaken. Trusting and awakening with a heart that is profoundly seeking is what the flowering of the Dharma is. And so that we might trust in, and awaken to, His immeasurable life with a heart that is profoundly seeking That which is the Truth, He vowed to be reborn in this everyday land of ours. By means of His spiritual powers, the strength of His compassion, and His capacity for immeasurable life, the Tathagata has helped us to trust and awaken by inclining us towards our mind, by inclining us towards our body, by inclining us towards the whole universe, by inclining us towards the Buddhas and Ancestors, by inclining us towards all thoughts and things, by inclining us towards the True Form of all things, by inclining us towards skin and flesh, bones and marrow, and by inclining us towards birth and death, coming and going. These instances of trusting and awakening are 'seeing Buddha'. Thus, we know that we can encounter a Buddha with the eyes of the mind and that we can see Buddha with the Eye of trusting and awakening.

Surely, the fact that He speaks not only of our seeing Buddha but also of our seeing His continual existence on the Divine Vulture Peak means that the continual existence of the Peak occurs simultaneously with the Tathagata's life. So, seeing Buddha continually existing on the Divine Vulture Peak describes the continual existence in the past, present and future of both the Tathagata and the Divine Vulture Peak. Bodhisattvas and shravakas alike will have continual existence, and giving voice to the Dharma will also have continual existence. We will see the everyday world as bedecked with lapis lazuli, ever calm, just, and proper. Do not be troubled when seeing this everyday world, for what is high is on a level with whatever is high, and what is low is on a level with whatever is low. This land is a land of lapis lazuli. Do not disparage those eyes that see it as ever calm, just, and proper, for indeed the land of lapis lazuli is ever just so. If you treat this land as not being that of lapis lazuli, the Divine Vulture Peak will not be the Divine Vulture Peak, and Shakyamuni Buddha will not be Shakyamuni Buddha. To trust and

12. Shravakas, here and later in the text, refer to those who, along with Bodhisattvas, stayed to listen to the Buddha's Teaching while others, being too proud, left in the middle of the Buddha's expressing the Dharma.

realize that this land is lapis lazuli is the appearance of profound trust and awakening, for this is seeing Buddha.

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Shakyamuni Buddha, in addressing His great assembly, once said in verse:

When those who wholeheartedly yearn to see the Buddha,
Do not begrudge even their own lives,
Then I, with all the Sangha,
Will appear together on the Divine Vulture Peak.

The wholeheartedness spoken of here is not the wholeheartedness, say, of ordinary folk or of those who follow lesser courses: it is the wholeheartedness derived from yearning to encounter Buddha. 'The wholeheartedness derived from yearning to encounter Buddha' refers to the Divine Vulture Peak, along with all the Sangha. When each individual, in private, arouses the desire to see Buddha, that person desires to see Buddha through devotion to the Heart of the Divine Vulture Peak. Thus, wholeheartedness is already the Divine Vulture Peak, so how could one's whole being not appear together with that Heart? How could it not be body and mind together as one? Our body and mind are already like this, just as are the years of our life and our life itself. Thus, we entrust our own regrets, which are merely our regrets, to the unsurpassed Way of the Divine Vulture Peak. Therefore, Shakyamuni Buddha said that His appearing on the Divine Vulture Peak, along with all His Sangha, is brought about by our wholehearted desire to see Buddha.

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Shakyamuni Buddha, in addressing His great assembly, once said in verse:

If you give voice to this Teaching,
This, then, is to see Me,
As well as the Tathagata Whose Treasures Are Abundant,
Along with all My many transformations.[13]

What this Scripture is voicing is, "I continue to abide in this world, using My spiritual powers to make confused beings not see Me, though I am near." The Tathagata's marvelous spiritual powers, both visible and invisible, have bestowed

13. The Tathagata Whose Treasures Are Abundant is said to have appeared and praised Shakyamuni Buddha after the latter had given voice to the first ten chapters of the *Lotus Scripture*. The transformations spoken of refer to the many ways in which the Cosmic Buddha, Vairochana, manifests through Shakyamuni Buddha.

upon Him the meritorious functioning expressed by "This then is to see Me," and so forth.

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Shakyamuni Buddha, in addressing His great assembly, also said in verse:

Those who can keep to this Scripture
Are persons who already behold Me
Along with the Buddha Whose Treasures Are Abundant,
As well as all My various bodily transformations.

Because it is difficult to keep to this Scripture, the Tathagata urged us to do so as a matter of daily practice.

If there are people who, on their own, keep to this Scripture, they will encounter Buddha. You need to realize that the one who meets Buddha is the one who is keeping to the Scripture, and that the one who is keeping to the Scripture is the one who is seeing Buddha. Thus, someone who, upon hearing but a single verse or a single line, accepts and keeps to it is someone who will be able to see Shakyamuni Buddha, as well as meet the Buddha Whose Treasures Are Abundant and see all His various bodily transformations. And such a one will receive the Transmission of the Treasure House of the Buddha's Teaching, and acquire the True Eye of Buddha, and will see what the life of a Buddha is, attain the Eye to go beyond 'Buddha', get the fleshy topknot of a Buddha, and understand what a Buddha's Nose means.

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The Buddha Whose Wisdom Has Flowered, Who is Lord of the Constellations, and Whose Voice Thunders Forth from the Clouds, in addressing the Lord of Wondrous Adornment, once said, "O Great Lord, you need to keep in mind that a good spiritual friend is a great persuader, one who guides us to change so that we may see the Buddha and give rise to the heart of supreme, fully perfected enlightenment."

At this time, the great assembly had not yet folded up their sitting mats. Even though we may speak of the Buddhas of past, present, or future, you should not liken these to the three temporal worlds of ordinary people. What we call 'the past' is what is in our minds, what we call 'the present' is our fist, and what we call 'the future' is what is in the back of our minds. So, the Buddha Whose Wisdom Has Flowered, Who is Lord of the Constellations and Whose Voice Thunders Forth from the Clouds, is seeing Buddha, which arises in the mind. The stock phrase 'to

see Buddha right now' is just like this.[14] 'Guiding all beings to change' is seeing Buddha, and seeing Buddha is giving rise to the mind of supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. Giving rise to the mind of enlightenment is seeing Buddha from start to finish.

❀

Shakyamuni Buddha also said in verse:

Those who practice deeds of merit
And are gentle, honest, and forthright,
All see Me in body
And hear Me voice the Dharma.

What He calls 'deeds of merit' is being dragged through the mud and being stuck in the water, following waves and chasing after billows.[15] He describes those who put this into practice as being gentle, honest, and forthright, as in "I am also like this, and you are also like this." Being so, they see Buddha within the mud and they encounter Buddha within the midst of waves, and they thereby participate in His existing here, voicing the Dharma.

At the same time, in present-day Great Sung China, the crowd that goes around calling themselves teachers of Zen is large indeed. They do not comprehend the length and breadth of the Buddha's Dharma, for what they have seen and heard is slight indeed. After learning by rote barely two or three sentences of Rinzai's or Ummon's, they fancy that they have obtained the whole truth of the Buddha Dharma. If the truth of the Buddha Dharma was totally exhausted in two or three sentences of Rinzai's or Ummon's, the Buddha Dharma would not have reached us today. It is hard enough to hear of Rinzai and Ummon being described as venerable from the point of view of the Buddha Dharma. How much less venerable are that bunch today who fall far short of Rinzai and Ummon! They are rabble not worth mentioning. Being too dull-witted, they can hardly clarify for themselves what the heart of the Buddha's Teaching is, so they go about arbitrarily slandering the Buddhist Scriptures, ignoring altogether the part about putting Them into practice and studying Them. Such people should be called non-Buddhist fishy folk. They are not the offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors, much less have they reached the realm of having seen a Buddha! They are a bunch who have not even grasped the principles of Confucius and Lao-tzu. As you are offspring in the house of the Buddhas and Ancestors, do not associate with that pack who go around

14. That is, it is something that arises in the mind.

15. That is, undergoing whatever is necessary to help all sentient beings realize the Truth.

proclaiming themselves to be teachers of Zen. Simply train yourselves thoroughly until you experience the Eye that sees Buddha.

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My late Master, the Old Buddha of Tendō, once quoted the following:

> King Prasenajit once asked the Venerable Arhat* Pindola, "I have heard it said that you, O Venerable One, have personally met the Buddha. Is that so?"
>
> As a sign of affirmation, the Venerable One used his hand to raise his eyebrow.

My late Master once wrote a eulogy to Pindola:

> *Raising his own eyebrow in response to the question, he laughed,*
> *Showing without guile that he had encountered Buddha in a familiar way.*
> *For which he deserves gratitude from the four quarters up to this very day.*
> *The Spring occurs within the twigs of the Plum, which, wrapped in snow, are ever so cold.*

'Encountering Buddha' does not mean that he saw his own Buddha Nature or the Buddha Nature of others; it means that he actually met the Buddha. Because 'one plum branch' is meeting 'one plum branch', it is the Flower's bursting open, bright and clear. The underlying principle that King Prasenajit is asking about now is whether Pindola had already met Buddha and whether he had become a Buddha himself. The Venerable One clearly raised an eyebrow in verification that he had seen Buddha, about which no one can be deceived. To this day, this underlying principle has not been abandoned. It is evident that Pindola deserves our gratitude due to his meeting Buddha as a direct experience, even though the experience left no visible trace. He is one of the three billion who had actually encountered Buddha.[16] The present reference is to that meeting with the Buddha, one that went beyond Pindola's merely seeing the Buddha's thirty-two marks. Who is so set apart from the realm of the thirty-two marks so as not to see them? There may well be

16. According to Nāgārjuna's commentary to the *Mahāprajnāpāramitā,* "The world is comprised of nine billion people, three billion of whom have encountered Buddha, three billion of whom have heard of the Buddha's coming into the world but have not actually met Him, and three billion who have neither encountered nor heard of Him."

great numbers of all sorts of ordinary humans, celestial beings, shravakas, and pratyekabuddhas* who do not know the principle of meeting Buddha. For instance, it is like saying that there are many who may be holding up a hossu, but there are not many who truly know what 'holding up the hossu' means.[17] 'To see Buddha' means 'to have the Buddha see us'. Even if one wished to conceal from oneself the signs of having met Buddha, they would already show, for this is the underlying principle of seeing Buddha. We need to thoroughly explore in detail the aspect of raising an eyebrow, making efforts as numerous as the sands of the Ganges with our body and mind. Even if we had dwelt together with Shakyamuni Buddha constantly, day and night, for hundreds of thousands of myriad eons, if we did not have the ability to raise an eyebrow, we would not see Buddha. Even though we are in a distant place some hundred thousand miles away from India, if we personally exhibit our ability to raise an eyebrow, it will be due to our having seen Shakyamuni Buddha from the time before the Lord of Emptiness,* for it is our seeing a branch of plum blossoms and seeing the Spring within the plum twigs. As a consequence, when we encounter Buddha face-to-face, we make three prostrations, or bow with hands in gasshō,* or let our face break into a smile, or make our Fist thunder forth, or sit cross-legged on our mat, doing meditation.

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The Venerable Pindola once went to a great gathering at the palace of King Ashoka for a meal. After the king had made an incense offering and had done his prostrations, he asked the Venerable One, saying, "I have heard it said that you, O Venerable One, have personally met the Buddha. Is that true?"

The Venerable One brushed up his eyebrow with his hand and said, "Do you get it?"

The king replied, "I don't understand."[18]

The Venerable One said, "When the Dragon King of Anavatapta invited the Buddha to a meal, a poor humble monk like me was also among the number that participated."

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17. The hossu is a ceremonial implement resembling an Indian fly-whisk. A monk who holds up a hossu is presumably one who is a genuine Master, but Dōgen is saying that many may hold it up, but that does not mean they know what they are doing.

18. "Do you get it?" has a double meaning. The king took the question literally, whereas Pindola was asking a spiritual question: "Do you get It?" meaning "Do you not see my enlightened Buddha Nature?"

The main point of King Ashoka's question, "I have heard it said that you, O Venerable One, have personally met the Buddha. Is that true?" was to find out whether the Venerable One was already a Venerable One. At that point and without hesitation, the Venerable One brushed up his eyebrow. This caused 'seeing Buddha' to appear in the world and caused 'becoming Buddha' to be personally seen. What he replied was, "When the Dragon King of Anavatapta invited the Buddha to a meal, a poor humble monk like me was also among the number that participated." Keep in mind that in a gathering of Buddhas, the Buddhas may well be as plentiful as rice, hemp, bamboo, and reeds, but no arhats or pratyekabuddhas may participate. Even were arhats and pratyekabuddhas to come, they would not be counted as being among the Buddhas. The Venerable One had already stated, "When the Dragon King of Anavatapta invited the Buddha to a meal, a poor humble monk like me was also among the number that participated." This is a statement about himself that arose naturally, for the principle of meeting Buddha is quite clear. 'Inviting the Buddha' refers not only to Shakyamuni Buddha but also to inviting all the Buddhas within the immeasurable and inexhaustible three temporal worlds, as well as all Buddhas in the ten quarters. To be included among all the invited Buddhas was his meeting Buddha as a direct experience, one that was unconcealed and beyond concealment. Pointing to 'seeing Buddha', 'seeing Master', 'seeing self', and 'seeing you' should be no different. What he called "the Dragon King of Anavatapta" is the Dragon King of Lake Anavatapta. In our country, Lake Anavatapta is called "The Lake Free of Suffering from Heat".[19]

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Meditation Master Honei Jin'yū once praised Pindola in verse:

When our Buddha met Pindola face-to-face,
The latter had eyebrows long, hair short, eyes fierce.
But King Ashoka still had his doubts.
Well, om mani śrī sūrya![20]

This eulogy is not a hundred percent right on, but I offer it because it is worth exploring as a possible point of view.

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19. Lake Anavatapta is traditionally said to be in Tibet, and is considered to be the source of the four major rivers of India. The particular Dragon King referred to is one of four who resided in the lake and were converted to Buddhism. As a result he became free from the sufferings that dragon kings are otherwise heir to.

20. *'Om mani śrī sūrya'* (Hail to him who is a veritable pearl that shines like the sun!) is a mantra praising and confirming the Buddhahood of Pindola.

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Jōshū was once asked by a monk, "I have heard it said that you, O Venerable Monk, personally had a face-to-face encounter with Nansen. Is that true?"

The Master replied, "In our Chinshū district, we grow really big daikon radishes."

What Jōshū is now showing through his response is his experience of intimately meeting Nansen. It is not that he has words for it or that he does not have words for it; it is not that they are words that a Master or disciple might utter or words that common folk might utter. It is not his raising an eyebrow, or his brushing up an eyebrow, or his face-to-face encountering of Nansen's eyebrow. Even though he was a person of excellent talents who walked his own way, if he had not encountered Nansen, he could not have been like that. Great Master Jōshū uttered the words, "In our Chinshū district, we grow really big daikon radishes," when he was Abbot of Shinsai-in Monastery in the Chōka Gardens of the Chinshū district.[21] He was later given the posthumous title of Great Master Shinsai. Because this was the way he was, he correctly Transmitted the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors after the Eye that sees Buddha had opened through his training. When there is a correct Transmission of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, it manifests in one's everyday behavior as a softening, as an open-heartedness.

Delivered to the assembly at Mount Yamashibu on the nineteen day of the eleventh lunar month during the winter of the first year of the Kangen era (December 31, 1243).

Copied in the quarters of the Abbot's assistant in Daibutsu-ji Temple in Yoshida district, Echizen Province, on the sixteenth day of the tenth month during the winter of the second year of the Kangen era (November 17, 1244).

Ejō

21. Jōshū's remark can be understood as follows: just as my Master Nansen was to me, his disciple, so I am to my disciples, who are like the daikon radishes that I cultivate in our monastery garden, in that they sit still within their growing place, becoming ever larger and more deeply-rooted, just like a daikon.

60

On Seeking One's Master Far and Wide

(Henzan)

Translator's Introduction: The term *'henzan'* conventionally refers to the practice of a novice monk's going throughout the country on a pilgrimage to seek a Master under whom to study and train, and possibly to spiritually awaken. As such, it might be rendered as 'seeking a Master far and wide'. Based on several kōan stories, Dōgen understands the term as referring to thoroughly exploring the Matter through one's training with one's Master, which does not require leaving one's training place. In this sense, one is seeking far and wide within oneself for the Master, which is one's True Self.

To practice the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors is to become enlightened through and through, to go forth with no strings entangling our feet, with clouds appearing under our feet. Even though it has been described like this, when the Flower opens, the whole world is awakened. As Tōzan put it: "I constantly make the Way the important Matter."* This is why there is the saying that a sweet melon is sweet right to its stem and a bitter melon is bitter down to its roots: the sweetness of what is sweet is sweet right to its very stem. This is how Tōzan had explored the Matter through his training with his Master.

> Great Master Gensha Shibi was once summoned by his Master Seppō, who said to him, "O Shibi, my austere monk, why haven't you gone out on a pilgrimage to seek a Master to train with?"
>
> He replied, "Bodhidharma did not come east to China for that, nor did the Second Ancestor go west to India for that!" Seppō thoroughly approved of what Shibi had said.

In this dialogue, the conventional meaning that underlies the term *'henzan'* has been turned completely upside down. And furthermore, what Shibi said is not something found in holy writ. What yardstick could possibly be used to measure his awakening?

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* See *Glossary*.

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When Nangaku Ejō first visited the Old Buddha Daikan Enō, the Old Buddha said, "What is it that comes thus?"

Nangaku thoroughly explored this mudball with his Master during a span of eight years. Finally he made his move, which was his thorough exploration with his Master, saying to the Old Buddha, "I have realized what you meant when I first came here. Upon receiving me, you said, 'What is it that comes thus?'"

Thereupon, the Old Buddha Enō asked, "And, pray, just what have you realized?"

Nangaku then replied, "Were I to try to put the One Matter into words, they would miss the mark." This was the manifestation of his thorough exploration with his Master, his manifestation of his eight years of training.

The Old Buddha Enō asked, "And is this a substitute for training to become enlightened?"

Nangaku responded, "It is not that there is no training for enlightenment, but rather, there is nothing to be had that will stain It."

Thereupon, Enō said, "I am no different, and you are no different, and all the Buddhas and Ancestors of India were no different."

After this, Ejō explored the Matter with his Master, inside and out, during another span of eight years. Counting from beginning to end, it was during a span of fifteen years that he thoroughly explored the Matter with his Master.[1]

His 'coming thus' was his thorough exploration of the Matter with his Master. With his remark, "Were I to try to put the One Matter into words, they would miss the mark," he opened the door to the Temple and went in to meet the Buddhas and Ancestors: this too was how he sought far and wide for a Master. After entering the picture, he pursued his training with his Master, committing himself to turning away from multitudinous forms of delusion, which goes beyond casually entering one monastery upon leaving another. His going in and meeting the Buddhas Eye-

1. By Japanese reckoning, he did not train for a full eight years but within the span of eight calendar years. Hence, the eighth year in which he trained before awakening was also the first year in which he trained after awakening.

to-Eye was his seeking a Master far and wide, and his earnest acceptance of the Teaching was his exploring the Matter with his Master. To see through, and beyond, the flesh of the Master's face is precisely what exploring the Matter far and wide with one's Master means.

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From the first, the purpose of Seppō's remark concerning visiting other Masters was not to recommend that Shibi leave the monastery, nor was it to recommend that he go traveling north or south. It was to help foster the kind of exploring far and wide that Shibi himself expressed by saying, "Bodhidharma did not come east to China for that, nor did the Second Ancestor go west to India for that!" Shibi's saying that Bodhidharma did not come east to China for that goes beyond any silly remarks about his coming not being a coming. It is the principle of the Great Earth not having a single clod to tread upon. What Shibi calls 'Bodhidharma' is but one part of the stream of life. Even if all the eastern lands had suddenly come to a full boil and had sought Bodhidharma out to serve under him, this would not be the same as his turning away from delusion nor would it be the same as his turning himself around within the outpouring of someone else's words. Because Bodhidharma did not come to the eastern lands for such things, he saw the Face in an eastern land.[2] Even though he saw the Face of Buddhas and the Face of Ancestors in an eastern land, this 'land' goes beyond his coming east to China, for that would have been like his grasping what the Buddhas and Ancestors are while losing sight of his own Nose.[3] In sum, 'land' is beyond being east or west: 'east and west' has nothing to do with lands.

As to our Second Ancestor, Taiso Eka, not going west to India, in that he thoroughly explored 'India' with his Master, he did not actually travel west to India. Had the Second Ancestor actually gone to India, it would simply be his 'having dropped off a forearm'.[4] Now, why did the Second Ancestor not go to India? He did not go to India because he had leapt into his Master's blue Eye. If he had not leapt into his Master's blue Eye, he certainly should have gone to India. Instead, he scraped out Bodhidharma's Eye as his thorough exploration of the

2. A reference to his four Chinese disciples, all of whom awoke to the Truth.

3. 'Losing sight of one's Nose' is a Zen phrase for missing the vitally important part, namely, one's Original Self.

4. This refers to spiritually severing one's attachments in order to find the Truth.

Matter.[5] Going west to India or coming east to China is not thoroughly exploring the Matter with one's Master, nor is someone making a thorough search by proceeding to Mount Tendai or Mount Nangaku, or by going to Mount Godai or to the heavens above. If you do not see through, and rid yourself of, your concept of the four seas and the five lakes, yours will not be a thorough exploration with your Master.[6] Going back and forth between the four seas and the five lakes does not constitute a thorough exploration of the Matter. It just makes our path slippery and our feet sore, thereby causing us to fall and lose sight of our thorough exploration.

Speaking more generally, because we make our penetration into Master Chōsa Keishin's statement, "The whole universe in all ten directions is our True Body," our exploring of the Matter with our Master, this will be our study and practice of Bodhidharma's not coming east to China and the Second Ancestor's not going west to India. Thoroughly exploring the Matter with one's Master means that when a stone is large, it is large just as it is, and when a stone is small, it is small just as it is. Without setting stones in motion, we let the large ones do their training and the small ones do theirs. While training, to encounter a hundred thousand myriad things in a hundred thousand myriad places is still not thoroughly exploring the Matter. Turning ourselves around a hundred thousand myriad times within the outpouring of half a word is our thorough exploration of the Matter. For example, working the soil is simply working the soil, which is exploring the Matter thoroughly. To go from working the soil once to working the sky once and then to working the four quarters and eight directions once is not thoroughly exploring the Matter. When Gutei was exploring the Matter with Master Tenryū, he realized the realm of the One-finger, which was a thorough exploring of the Matter with his Master. Gutei's simply raising one finger was his thorough exploring of the Matter.[7]

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5. To 'scrape out' Bodhidharma's Eye means to fully absorb his spiritual Teaching and to make It one's own.

6. 'The four seas and the five lakes' is a reference to the whole world with China as its center.

7. At the heart of Meditation Master Tenryū's Dharma was his teaching that All is One, which he would express by holding up his index finger. Tenryū's very young disciple, Gutei, took to imitating his Master's gesture but without understanding what Tenryū was expressing. On one occasion when Gutei raised his finger, Tenryū is said to have cut it off. Frightened by this, Gutei ran to leave the room. When Tenryū called to him, Gutei turned to face his Master, who then held up his finger. This triggered Gutei's awakening to the Truth. The cutting off of Gutei's finger, like Taiso Eka's cutting off his arm, is probably meant

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Shibi once addressed his assembly, saying, "I and Old Master Shakyamuni have done the same practice."

There was a monk at the time who came forth and asked, "I wonder what person you encountered?"

The Master answered, "The Sha family's third son, while on a fishing boat."[8]

From start to finish, the genuineness of what our venerable Master Shakyamuni encountered is naturally the same as His encounter with 'Old Master Shakyamuni'. And because the genuineness from start to finish of what the venerable monk Shibi encountered is naturally the same as his encounter with the 'Venerable Fellow Shibi', our venerable Master Shakyamuni and the venerable monk Shibi have made the same encounter. Both our venerable Master Shakyamuni and the venerable monk Shibi explored to the utmost the sufficiency and insufficiency of their spiritual search, a practice which we take to be the underlying principle of thoroughly seeking one's Master.[9] Because our venerable Master Shakyamuni had the same kind of experience as the venerable monk Shibi had, He is an Old Buddha, and because the venerable monk Shibi had the same kind of experience as our venerable Master Shakyamuni had, he is one of His descendants. This principle should be thoroughly explored with one's Master, and in detail.

You need to clarify through your training the import of Shibi's saying that he met the Sha family's third son while on a fishing boat. That is to say, we explore through and through, with the utmost diligence, the instance when both our venerable Master Shakyamuni and the venerable monk Shibi had the same kind of simultaneous encounter with their Master. There was the venerable monk Shibi who encountered the Sha family's third son while on a fishing boat, and there was the Sha family's third son who encountered the shaven-headed monk upon Mount Shibi. Do your utmost to let yourself and others experience the sameness and experience the difference. The venerable monk Shibi and our venerable Master

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metaphorically as the dropping off of body and mind, since such physically violent acts are clearly serious violations of the Precepts.

8. An allusion to Shibi's meeting up with his own True Self while he was living on a fishing boat.

9. That is, their awakening to their True Self was fully sufficient and, at the same time, it was insufficient in that there is always the ever going on, ever becoming Buddha.

Shakyamuni had the same kind of encounter and did the same exploring far and wide. In order for you to have the same encounter, you need to explore far and wide the principle that 'the Sha's third son' and 'I' have encountered a One beyond what words can describe. When the principle of seeking the Master far and wide has not yet arisen, one is unable to encounter one's Self and, lacking an encountering with one's Self, one is unable to encounter another and, lacking an encountering with another, one is unable to encounter 'such a person'* and, being unable to encounter the true 'I', one is unable to encounter a Master's Fist[10] and, being unable to encounter a Master's Eye, one is unable to let oneself hook one's Self and haul It up, and one is unable to let It come on board even before It is hooked.[11]

When we have completely exhausted our seeking far and wide, we drop off seeking far and wide. It is comparable to the saying, "When the sea has dried up, one does not see its bottom," or the saying, "When a person dies, the mind does not remain." 'When the sea has dried up' means 'when the whole sea has completely dried up'. At the same time, when the sea has indeed completely dried up, one does not see a seabed. 'Not remaining behind' and 'completely ceasing', together, comprise our human mind. The mind does not remain because it has customarily withered away into death. Hence, you need to recognize that the whole of a person is his mind and that the whole of the Mind is what a person is. In this manner, we thoroughly explore with our Master the front and back of each side of an issue.

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There was an occasion when my former Master Tendō Nyojō, the Old Buddha, was asked to give a Dharma talk by his veteran fellow monks, who had come from all over. Having gathered together in his Lecture Hall, they were given the following Teaching:

10. Some Zen Masters were in the habit of raising a fist to express That which goes beyond conceptualization or words.

11. The references to fishing are connected with Shibi's 'catching his True Self' while he was living on a fishing barge. 'Fishing' itself has a metaphoric connection with doing one's meditation.

The Great Way has no fixed gate.
From out the crown of our heads, It leaps forth in all directions.
Unbounded as space itself, It leaves no traces behind.
Still, It has found Its way into Seiryō's Nose.[12]

Even the bunch of you who would betray Gautama encounter It thus,
To say nothing of those of you born from Rinzai's woeful womb.[13]
Ho! In our great family we are tumbled about like apricot blossoms set dancing by the spring breeze.
Astonished, they fall, flying wildly in a riot of crimson.

For the present Dharma talk, veteran monks from all directions came to Seiryō Temple in Chien-k'ang Prefecture, where the Old Buddha who was my former Master was serving as chief priest. He and these fellow monks of long-standing were sometimes related like guest and host and sometimes they were simply fellow practitioners sitting side-by-side in meditation. They were such old friends. How could their number fail to be large? It was an occasion when they had gathered together to petition him for a Dharma talk. Veteran monks who were totally devoid of having anything concrete to say to him were not among his friends or among that number who had petitioned him. Although those old friends were themselves highly respected and prized, they waited upon him, requesting his Teaching.

Speaking more generally, my former Master's practice of thoroughly seeking far and wide was not something fully mastered by those in any other place. In the last two or three centuries in Great Sung China, there has not been an Old Buddha comparable to my former Master.

"The Great Way has no fixed gate" describes four or five thousand flower and willow lanes, and twenty or thirty thousand music pavilions.[14] At the same

12. Seiryō is an allusion to Master Tendō himself, who at the time of this Dharma talk was chief priest at Seiryō Temple.

13. The overall tone of Tendō's poem, as well as Dōgen's subsequent comments, implies that the preceding two lines are meant ironically.

14. 'Flower and willow lanes' is a common euphemism in China and Japan for a red-light district. Similarly, the term 'pavilion', particularly in association with some kind of entertainment, customarily refers to a brothel. Given the historic practice of monastic

time, in letting one's whole self leap forth, we make no use of whatever may remain behind. It is our leaping forth from the crown of our head and entering into our Nostrils: it is these two together that we explore through our training with our Master. Those who have not yet leapt free through the crown of their head and have not yet turned themselves around within their very Nostrils are not persons who are exploring the Matter through their training with their Master, nor are they folks who are thoroughly seeking the Master far and wide. We should explore the essence of 'seeking the Master far and wide' just as Shibi did.

What the Fourth Ancestor explored through his training under the Third Ancestor during the span of nine years was, simply, seeking the Master far and wide. Meditation Master Nansen Fugan once resided in Chih-yang without leaving the mountain for some thirty years, which was his seeking the Master far and wide. Master Ungan Donjō and Master Dōgo Enchi, among others, diligently explored the Matter through their training at Meditation Master Yakusan's monastery for forty years, which was their seeking the Master far and wide. The Second Ancestor spent eight years exploring the Matter with his Master on Mount Sūzan and, through that training, thoroughly realized his Master's Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow.

'To seek the Master far and wide' simply means 'just sitting there, dropping off body and mind'. It is as if at the present moment, one goes to where one goes and one comes from where one comes, without their being the slightest gap between them. This is seeking the Master far and wide with one's whole body: this is the whole body of the Great Way. 'To go on, beyond the top of Vairochana* Buddha's head' is the meditative state that is utterly still. Decisive attainment of such a state is Vairochana Buddha's going on. To thoroughly awaken to seeking the Master far and wide by leaping forth means that the gourd leaps forth from the gourd plant. For a long time, we have regarded the stem end of the gourd to be the training place for our 'uncorking Buddha'. Its lifeline is like a thread. We gourds thoroughly explore the gourd plant through our training with our Master. Our

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celibacy both in Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, it is unlikely that Dōgen is suggesting or encouraging monks to engage in behavior that would break their vow of celibacy. Even so, there is the teaching in Buddhism that after someone has fully awakened to the Truth, and the false self has completely dropped off, such a person can freely go anywhere, even into brothels or wine shops, without being tempted to partake of what was being offered, and without judging those who were engaged in such activities.

raising a single blade of grass is nothing other than our seeking the Master far and wide.[15]

Given to my assembly at my hermitage at the foot of Mount Yamashibu in Echizen Province on the twenty-seventh day of the eleventh lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (January 9, 1244).

Copied in the chief disciple's quarters at the same hermitage on the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth lunar month in the same year (February 8, 1244).

Ejō

15. Dōgen's gourd metaphor probably derives from a saying of his own Master, "The vine of the gourd plant embraces the gourd," which is an allusion to the Master-disciple relationship. To paraphrase this closing passage, the vine is like the lifeline of the Buddhas and Ancestors, which threads its way to sustain the disciple. The training place for disciple and Master is like the juncture where the stem joins the vine. Coming to know one's True Master, that is, one's Buddha Nature, is like picking a ripened gourd, which 'uncorks' (lets out) the Buddha within the disciple. As Dōgen says elsewhere, "Picking up a single blade of grass, we make it into a sixteen-foot tall golden body." So here, our simple action of making a beginning by 'raising a single blade of grass' sets us on our way to seeking far and wide with our Master for the True Master who, when ultimately found, will be the fully erect golden body of Buddha.

61

On the Eye of a Buddha

(Ganzei)

Translator's Introduction: *Ganzei*, the title of this discourse, has several meanings. It literally refers to the physical organs of sight: the eyes. However, in most contexts its meaning is spiritual. For instance, in a story in which a disciple asks his Master to grant him the Eye, he is asking to be Transmitted, that is, to have passed on to him the Eye of the True Teaching. In other contexts, it refers to the Eye of Wisdom (Wise Discernment) or to the Eye with which one perceives that someone is 'such a person', that is, a person who has already awakened to his or her Buddha Nature. While the reader needs to be aware that the meaning of the word Eye in Dōgen's discourses does shift, which of these various meanings is intended is usually fairly clear from context.

When we take up our explorations of the Matter* through our training for billions of myriad eons and roll them into balls, they will make eighty-four thousand Eyes.[1]

❀

When my late Master, the Old Buddha of Tendō, was residing as Abbot at Zuigan Monastery, he once said as part of his formal teaching to his assembly:

> *The autumn wind is cool, the autumn moon is bright,*
> *It lights up the Great Earth all with Its hills and streams.*
> *My eyes are atwinkle as we meet each other face-to-face,*
> *My blows and shouts mingle as I test my patch-robed monks.*

Now, 'testing patch-robed monks' means testing whether they too are Old Buddhas. The pivotal point is that he mixed his blows and shouts, using them to test his disciples. It is his Eye that manifests such vitality. The Great Earth with all Its hills and streams is the appearance of things as our Eye reveals them. It is the coolness of the autumn wind, which is inexhaustible. It is the brightness of the autumn moon, which is inexhaustible. Being the coolness of the autumn wind, It is

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* See *Glossary*.

1. This is a 'recipe' for taking the fruits of one's training and using them to help others see with the Eye of a Buddha. It relates to a story about his Master, which Dōgen later presents.

beyond comparison with even the four great oceans. Being the brightness of the autumn moon, It is more resplendent than a thousand suns and moons. Its coolness and resplendence are the Great Earth with Its hills and streams which our vision perceives. Patch-robed monks are Buddhas and Ancestors. The one whose Eye does not opt for enlightenment, or for being unenlightened, or for being in some state before or after enlightenment, is one who is an Ancestor of the Buddha. 'Testing' is the Master's disclosing the Eye. It is the disciple's manifesting the One Eye. It is the living Eye itself. 'Meeting each other face-to-face' is the mutual encountering of Master and disciple. 'Mutually encountering' is the Eye being sharp; 'meeting face-to-face' is the Eye thundering forth. In short, do not think that if your whole body is large, your whole Eye must be small. Even those in past ages who have considered themselves to be ever so eminent have been in agreement that their body is large and their eyes are small. This is because they were not yet in possession of their Eye.

❀

Once when Tōzan Ryōkai was in the monastic assembly of Ungan Donjō, Ungan came upon him making straw sandals,[2] whereupon Tōzan spoke to Ungan, saying, "I pray that you will grant me the Eye, O Venerable Monk."[3]

Ungan asked, "Who did you give yours away to?"

Tōzan replied, "This person never had One."[4]

Ungan then asked, "Supposing you had One, where would you turn in order to give It to someone else?"

Tōzan had no words.

Ungan then asked, "Is the Eye you are praying for your Eye or not?"

Tōzan replied, "It is not a matter of It being my Eye or not being my Eye."

Ungan responded, "Ahaaa!"[5]

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2. The practice of making straw sandals is considered one of the secret meritorious practices, since such sandals were made for a fellow monk whose sandals had worn out. Without the maker letting it be known who he was, the sandals would be left where the chosen monk could find them.

3. Tōzan is formally asking Ungan for the Transmission.

4. 'This person' is a humble way to refer to oneself and avoids the assertion of a personal 'I'.

5. Ungan's response was his way of affirming Tōzan's answer.

So, fully displaying one's exploring the Matter through training with one's Master is asking for the Eye. Practicing the Way in the Cloud Hall, attending the Abbot's formal talks in the Dharma Hall, entering the Master's quarters to inquire of the Way, these are ways of asking for the Eye.[6] In general, following the assembly when leaving formal meditation and following the assembly when coming to formal meditation are ways of asking for the Eye as a matter of course. The underlying principle that the Eye is beyond self and beyond other is evident.

As the dialogue said, Tōzan had already requested help by asking the Master to grant him the Eye. Be clear about this: if the Eye is truly yours, you do not need to ask anyone for It, and if It is truly someone else's, you cannot beg It off that person.

> Ungan pointed to this by asking, "Who did you give yours away to?"

There is the occasion of Its 'being yours' and there is the dispensing of It by 'giving It to whomever'. Tōzan's saying, "This person never had One," was his own way of expressing his Eye.[7] You should take the time to explore through your training the Truth revealed by his manifesting the Way in this manner.

> Ungan asked, "Supposing you had One, in what direction would you turn in order to give It to someone else?"

The Eye in this expression signifies that the 'never had' of "This person never had One" is both to have One and to have turned in order to give It to someone else. To turn in order to give It to someone is to have It. You need to thoroughly explore that this is 'such an expression'.

> Tōzan had no words.

He was not dumbstruck. Rather, he was a victim of the sudden arising of dualistic thoughts due to past karma.*

> Pointing out the Matter for his disciple's sake, Ungan then asked, "Is the Eye you are praying for your Eye or not?"

This is a detail concerning the one-eyedness of the Eye. It is his vigorously shattering Tōzan's 'Eye'. The main point of what Ungan is saying is, "It is the Eye asking for the Eye." It is water pulling water along. It is mountains standing in

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6. Making straw sandals as a secret meritorious practice would also be a way.

7. That is, there is no 'I' that has the Eye of the True Treasure as a personal possession, and everyone has It.

rows with mountains. It is our going forth among those of unlike mind and our living amidst those of like mind.

> Tōzan replied, "It is not a matter of It being my Eye or not being my Eye."

This is his Eye singing forth of Its own accord.[8] Whenever body or mind, thought or knowledge, or form or rank are present, you should encounter those conditions as being the living Eye which is coming forth of Its own accord from beyond the duality of having or not having. All the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds are continually standing in the Dharma Hall listening to the Eye's turning of the Great Wheel of the Dharma and giving voice to It. In short, within the innermost realm of what we thoroughly explore through our training, we leap into the Eye as we give rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood, as we do the training and practice, and as we awaken to Great Wisdom. From the first, this Eye is beyond self and beyond other. Because It has no obstructions of any kind, the Great Matter is likewise free of obstructions.

❀

In commenting on the preceding story, Rōya Ekaku, a Master of old, once said, "How wonderful indeed are the Buddhas of the Ten Quarters. From the first, They have been flowers within the Eye." What he called 'the Buddhas of the Ten Quarters' is <u>your</u> Eye. The flowers within the Eye are the Buddhas of the Ten Quarters. Your present activities of stepping forward and stepping back, of just sitting and just sleeping, are just such flowers. Be that as it may, you <u>have</u> inherited the power of the Eye Itself. It is your being stripped of your delusions and your being set loose to rid yourself of them.

❀

> My late Master, the Old Buddha, once said, "I'm going to scrape out the Eye of Bodhidharma and make It into mudballs to pelt you monks with." With a shout he said, "Yes! The sea has dried up, right to the bottom, and its waves are so high that they smite the very heavens!"

While in the Abbot's quarters at Seiryō-ji Temple, he made a point of this for the sake of the vast sea of assembled monks. This is why he spoke of 'pelting them', as if he were saying 'making them into a real person'. Because of his pelting, all the

8. This Eye is Tōzan's True Eye.

various monks would give rise to their True Countenance. He meant, for instance, that with the Eye of Bodhidharma he would make each of them into a 'real person'. And he has done so! This is what the underlying principle of 'pelting persons' is. Because each person is someone who has been struck alive with the Eye, the fist with which he struck someone in the Cloud Hall, the traveling staff* with which he struck someone in the Dharma Hall, and the lacquered hossu* with which he struck someone in the Abbot's quarters are all the Eye of Bodhidharma. His gouging out Bodhidharma's Eye and making It into mudballs to pelt monks with is called today 'seeking an interview with the Abbot to ask for a spiritual boon' or 'getting up in the morning to do one's morning practice' or 'making the effort to just sit'. And what kind of person does he beat them into? "The sea has dried up, right to the bottom, and its waves are so high that they smite the very heavens!"

❀

My late Master, the Old Buddha, once entered the Dharma Hall and spoke in praise of the Tathagata's realizing the Way, saying in verse:

For six years He stumbled on through the weeds of provisional truth with the determined spirit of a wild fox.
He would leap forth with His whole body, only to become entangled in delusion's vines.
Having totally lost His eyes, there was no place for Him to seek for It.
Now He goes about deceiving others by saying that He was awakened by the morning star.

That "He was awakened by the morning star" are the words of someone who had totally lost His eyes at that very moment. This was the entangled condition of His whole being, and so He easily leapt free from it. Seeking what is sought is seeking for that which does not exist in what manifests before our very eyes; It is seeking for that which does not exist in what has not yet manifested before our very eyes.

❀

In the Dharma Hall, my late Master, the Old Buddha, once said in verse:

When Gautama finally lost His deceiving eyes,
There appeared in the snow a single blossom on one bough of the Old Plum Tree.
What has now arrived is the growing of thorn-like spurs,
So that all the more I laugh at the spring winds which send all things flying in disarray.

Gautama's eyes are not simply one or two or three eyes. To which eye or eyes does this losing refer? It may be that there are eyes which are called 'losing one's eyes'. Further, in such a situation as this, there is the Eye that is 'a single blossom on one bough of the Old Plum Tree'. Before the spring arrives, this Eye discloses the heart of spring.

❀

Once when ascending to the Dharma seat, my late Master, the Old Buddha, said:

> Day after long day the pouring rain, then finally the sky completely clear! The croaking of bullfrogs and the mumbling of earthworms. The Old Buddhas have never passed away, displaying for us Their diamond-hard Eye. Oh, dear! I've tangled the entangled.

'The diamond-hard Eye' is the pouring rain day after long day; It is the sky's being completely clear. It is the croaking of bullfrogs, It is the mumbling of earthworms and, because They have never passed away, It is the Old Buddhas. Even if the Old Buddhas were to pass away, it would not be the same as the passing away of those who are not Old Buddhas.

❀

My late Master, the Old Buddha, while giving a Dharma talk, once said:

> From the winter solstice on, the days grow longer as the sun moves farther southward. From within my Eye, a light pours forth, and into my Nostrils pours the breath of Life.

In the endless stream of present moments from the winter solstice to the summer solstice, though the days and months grew ever longer, he let go of measuring them. This is the light that was emitted from his Eye. It was his 'seeing mountains' in the light of day.[9] This is what everyday, dignified behavior was like among his assembly.

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9. That is, his seeing that his assembly of monks was doing their training well.

❀

My late Master, the Old Buddha, when giving a Dharma talk at Jinzu-ji Temple in Lin'an prefecture, said:

> This morning is the first day of the second lunar month. The Eye of my hossu is bulging out; It is bright like a mirror and as shiny black as lacquer. With a dash, It leaps across heaven and earth and swallows them up, as both together are but a single form of It. You of this monks' assembly are still beating your heads against your walls and butting up against your fences. And, in short, to what end? I've given you my all, tossing It your way with a hearty laugh. I entrust everything to the Spring Wind, for there is nothing more that I need to do.

In this instance, his saying "beating your heads against your walls and butting up against your fences" means the whole of your walls are doing the beating and the whole of your fences are doing the butting. And there is this Eye. 'This morning', 'the second lunar month', 'the first day' are all instances of the Eye; that is, the Eye of the hossu.[10] Because It leaps across every barrier with a dash, it is 'this morning', and because in thousands of myriad ways It swallows up the whole universe, heaven and earth, it is 'the second month', and when I've given you my all, tossing It your way, it is 'the first day'. Such is the life of one who is manifesting the Eye.

Given to the assembly on the seventeenth day of the twelfth lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (January 28, 1244) while staying at Yamashibu Peak in Echizen province.

Copied by me on the twenty-eighth day of the same month (February 8, 1244) whilst in the quarters of the Abbot's assistant at the foot of the Peak.

Ejō

10. The hossu is used as part of the ceremonial connected with the disciples coming up in front of the whole community to ask the Master their spiritual question. This ceremony is customarily performed twice each month.

62

On Everyday Life

(Kajō)

Translator's Introduction: *Kajō* literally means 'what is habitual (*jō*) in one's home life (*ka*)'. Throughout the discourse Dōgen speaks of *sahan*, literally 'tea and cooked rice', as the staples of everyday living. While at one level this term simply points out that the Buddhas and Ancestors, in Their humanity, are no different from any other person, it also, more significantly, carries a deeper spiritual connotation, referring to the everyday ceaseless practice that has spiritually sustained and nourished Them and which has the capacity to do the same for us.

Generally speaking, in the dwelling places of Buddhas and Ancestors, taking tea and eating rice is what constitutes Their everyday life.[1] This custom of taking tea and eating rice has been passed on to us and fully manifests itself in the here and now. This is why the taking of tea and the eating of rice by Buddhas and Ancestors has come down to us as a way of living.

❀

The monk Fuyō Dōkai, whilst on Mount Daiyō, once asked Tōsu, "The thoughts and sayings of the Buddha's Ancestors are like the tea and rice of everyday life. Putting these thoughts and sayings aside for the moment, is there any word or phrase you might have for the sake of others?"

Tōsu answered, "You, right now, say! The Emperor inside the capital rules it, so does he have to look back to previous emperors of legendary times, like Yü, T'ang, Yao, and Shun?"

Just when Daiyō was intent on opening his mouth, Tōsu picked up his ceremonial hossu* and covered Daiyō's mouth with it, saying, "At the very moment when you gave rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood, you immediately deserved thirty blows."

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1. Taking tea and eating rice is a metaphor for partaking of the Dharma which spiritually nourishes us.

* See *Glossary.*

Thereupon, Daiyō opened up to his enlightenment and, after having bowed in deepest respect to Tōsu, immediately took his leave.

Tōsu called out to him, "Come back a minute, acharya!"*

When Daiyō did not turn his head around, Tōsu said, "Have you, my disciple, arrived at the place where there is no doubt?"

Daiyō covered his ears with his hands and left.

So, clearly, we should preserve and take care of the teaching that the thoughts and sayings of the Buddha's Ancestors are the tea and rice of everyday life. The homely fare of everyday life is the thoughts of Buddhas and the sayings of Ancestors.[2] The Buddhas and Ancestors prepare the tea and rice, and the tea and rice help sustain and take care of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Since this is so, we, for our part, do not need to rely on anything apart from the potency of this tea and rice of Theirs. Simply, we do not squander the strength of the Buddhas and Ancestors that resides within the partaking of this tea and rice.

You would do well to explore with great diligence the remark about not looking back to previous emperors of legendary times such as Yü, T'ang, Yao, and Shun. You would also do well to explore how to let the question as to whether there is any word or phrase that you may have for the benefit of others spring forth from the crown of <u>your</u> head. You should experiment through your training with your Master to see if you can get it to spring forth.

❀

When Great Master Sekitō Kisen was at his hermitage on Mount Nangaku, he once said:

I've thatched me a grass hut, without a coin to my name.
Having finished eating rice, I feel content, and look to taking me a nap.

His 'having finished eating rice', which he said time after time, over and over again, is the thought and saying of an Ancestor of the Buddha who has explored what rice is. Someone who has not yet eaten rice is someone who has not yet experienced satiety. At the same time, this principle of 'feeling content, having finished eating rice,' manifests before one eats rice, while one is eating rice, and after one has eaten rice. In a house where people finish eating up their rice, to fail

2. 'Homely fare' (C. *t'su-cha tan-fan*), literally, 'coarse tea and thin gruel', is a conventional Chinese phrase used by a host as an apology for what is being offered to a guest.

to see that there is always the eating of rice is to explore through one's training only four or five measures out of ten.

❀

My late Master, an Old Buddha, when expounding the Teaching to his assembly, once said:

> I can recall an incident in which a monk asked Hyakujō, "Just what sort of thing is the Wondrous Matter?"*
>
> Hyakujō replied, "He sits alone atop Daiyū Peak.[3] O my great assembly, this Fellow cannot be disturbed by anything, so let Him sit for a while in meditation, eliminating dualistic thought."
>
> If there was someone today, a novice, say, who suddenly asked, "Just what sort of thing is the Miraculous Matter?" I would simply turn to the person and say, "What Miraculous Matter is there?" In short, it is the 'What!' in the alms bowl of pure compassion which was passed on to me to use for eating my rice.[4]

In the everyday life of the Buddhas and Ancestors, without fail, there is the Miraculous Matter, which is Their so-called 'sitting alone atop Daiyū Peak'. Even though we now encounter that Fellow when we let Him sit in meditation and eliminate dualistic thinking, It is still what the Miraculous Matter is. And there is that which is even more miraculous: the alms bowl of great compassion being passed on to Tendō, from which he ate his rice. The Miraculous Matter is each and every thing everywhere 'eating rice'. Thus, sitting alone atop Daiyū Peak is precisely what eating rice is. The alms bowl is what we use for eating rice, and whatever we use for eating our rice is our alms bowl. That is why it is the alms bowl of great compassion and why Tendō ate his rice from it. There was his knowing what rice is after he had fully satisfied himself. And there was his being satisfied from having completely eaten the rice. And there was his full awareness of the rice satisfying him. And there was his having been fully satisfied and yet continuing to eat his rice.

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3. Daiyū Peak is an alternative name for Mount Hyakujō, where Hyakujō had his monastery.

4. There is a play on words in this last sentence. 'The alms bowl of great compassion' can also be understood as an allusion to Tendō's alms bowl, which he had brought with him when he left Great Compassion Monastery in order to become Abbot of Tendō Monastery. The whole quotation was part of his inaugural Dharma talk to his new assembly.

Now then, just what could this alms bowl of his possibly be? From my perspective, it is not merely a wooden object, nor is it something black like lacquerware. Might it be the One of unyielding stone? Might it be the Iron Man? It is bottomless: it is beyond our own Nose. In its swallowing up empty space, empty space receives it, in gasshō.*

❀

My late Master, an Old Buddha, once addressed an assembly whilst in the Abbot's quarters at the Zuigan Pure Land Meditation Temple in the Taishū District, saying, "When hunger comes, I eat rice, and when tiredness comes, I take a sleep. Forges and bellows fill the universe."[5] His phrase, 'when hunger comes' refers to the life of one who habitually 'eats rice'. The person who has never yet eaten rice is someone incapable of hungering for it. Hence, you need to realize that we for whom hunger may well be an event in our everyday life are persons who must have decided to eat rice to the full.

'When tiredness comes' refers to being tired within tiredness, which habitually fully springs from a tired head.[6] Nevertheless, it is the here and now, wherein the whole of our being is swept clean, turned around, and put in order within our daily life.

'I take a sleep' refers to letting the ego 'nap', having borrowed the Buddha Eye, the Dharma Eye, the Eye of Wise Discernment, the Eye of the Ancestors, the Eye of those who act as the temple's pillars* and stone lanterns.*

❀

After my late Master, an Old Buddha, had gone by invitation from Zuigan-ji Temple in Taishū to Jinzu-ji Temple in Rin'an City, he once gave a talk in the Dharma Hall there, in which he said:

5. 'Forges and bellows' is a traditional Zen Buddhist metaphor for the conditions and expedient means that intensify the heat of training, whereby a trainee is forged into a True Monk. As Tendō Nyojō points out, these conditions and expedient means are available everywhere. In other words, all things have the capability of teaching us the Dharma.

6. That is, tiredness is a mental thing.

For half a year I ate rice as I sat atop a cloud-covered peak,
Sitting there to break through the smoke and mist which arose a thousand myriad times over,
When suddenly a resounding clap issued forth, as thunder rumbled o'er,
And the heavens, with springtime glow, shone like apricot blooms all crimson red.

All the methods of the Buddhas and Ancestors, as taught from the time of the Buddha, were Their 'eating rice whilst sitting atop a cloud-covered peak'. Thoroughly exploring how to carry on the Buddha's life of wise discernment was Their manifesting a life of eating rice. 'Sitting atop a cloud-covered peak for half a year' is called 'eating rice'. They do not know how much the smoke and mist, in which They are sitting in order to break through, has piled up. And, however sudden the clap of thunder may be, the springtime glow is simply the crimson of apricot blossoms.

The term 'the heavens' refers to being open at every moment of now. And those moments are what 'eating rice' is.

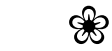
The Cloud-covered Peak is the name for a peak at Zuigan-ji Temple.

❀

My late Master, the Old Buddha, while in the Buddha Hall at Zuigan-ji Temple in Keigen City in the Minshū District, once expounded the Teaching to the assembly, saying:

> Right at this moment, put down the load you are carrying. 'The wondrous golden form' is putting on one's robe and eating one's rice: 'putting on one's robe and eating one's rice' is the wondrous golden form. Further, refrain from poking around, asking who is or isn't putting on their robe and eating rice. Do not talk about so-and-so being the Wondrous Golden Form. Should you so restrain yourself, it will be an expression of what Master Tendō meant when he said, "That is why I bow to you." As I am already eating my rice, so do your bow, with your hands in gasshō, and then eat <u>your</u> rice. We act like this because we earnestly shun going about while holding flowers aloft.[7]

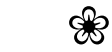
7. That is, going around acting holy.



The monk Chōkei Daian once addressed his assembly in the Dharma Hall, saying:

> I, Daian, stayed with Isan for thirty years. I supped on Isan rice. I urinated Isan urine. But I did not explore Isan's Zen. I simply raised one unsexed water buffalo. When it wandered off into the weeds, I'd haul it out. When it trespassed on someone's garden patch, I'd chastise it. As I had already bawled it out over a long time, people would treat it to such remarks as, "Oh, you poor creature." Now it has changed and become a white ox right out in the open. It is constantly right before my face. All day long, it clearly shines forth, manifesting the Dharma. Even if one were to try to drive it off, it would not go away.

Clearly, we should accept, and keep to, this address to his assembly. His thirty years of endeavor within the assembly of an Ancestor of the Buddha was his eating his rice, unmixed with cares and worries. When you manifest a life of eating rice, there are, quite naturally, the signs of your rearing a single castrated water buffalo.



> Great Master Jōshū Shinsai once asked a newly arrived monk, "Have you ever come here before?"
>
> The monk replied, "Yes, I have."
>
> The Master said, "Have some tea before you leave."
>
> He also asked another monk, "Have you ever come here before?"
>
> The monk replied, "No, I never have."
>
> The Master said, "Have some tea before you leave."
>
> The Prior of the monastery asked the Master, "Why did you say to the monk who had been here before, 'Have some tea before you leave,' and also say to the monk who had not been here before, 'Have some tea before you leave?'"
>
> The Master gestured for the Prior to come to him. When the Prior complied, the Master said, "Have some tea before you leave."[8]

8. Jōshū's questions are double-edged. While it appears as if he were asking a commonplace question as to whether someone had come to Jōshū's monastery before, he is actually asking a spiritual question (one which Dōgen will explore), namely, "Have you ever arrived at the

His 'here' is not something off the top of his head, nor does it refer to his Nose, nor does it refer to Jōshū.[9] Because he had leapt free of 'here', he had already arrived at the Here and Now and had not yet arrived at the Here.[10] Right here is where the What is, but those others merely talked about it in terms of 'having come before' or 'not having come before'. This is why my late Master said, "What person who takes residence either in a gilded tower or in a wine shop could come to call on Jōshū and drink his tea?"

And so it is that the everyday life of Buddhas and Ancestors is simply Their taking of Tea and Their eating of Rice.

Delivered to the assembly below Yamashibu Peak in Echizen Province on the seventeenth day of the twelfth lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (January 28, 1243).

Copied by me in the quarters of the Abbot's assistant below the peak on the first day of the first month in the second year of the same era (February 10, 1244).

Ejō

Here and Now?" Since both the two monks and the Prior all take Jōshū's question on a superficial level, Jōshū offers them tea (that is, the Teaching) before they go off to find That which is the Here and Now.

9. That is, the Here and Now is not an intellectual concept, nor is it a reference to Jōshū's own Original Nature, nor is it a personal reference to Jōshū himself.

10. That is, Jōshū had fully realized the Truth (his having arrived at the Here and Now) and at the same time, his training and practice continued with his 'always going on, always becoming Buddha' (his not yet having arrived at the Here).

63

On the Roar of the Dragon

(Ryūgin)

Translator's Introduction: The roar of the Dragon refers to a sound not unlike that of the wind blowing through a grove of barren trees. This sound may become audible during meditation when the meditator has dropped off body and mind, that is, has let go of the greed, anger, and delusion which form attachments to the five skandhas. The withered tree that Dōgen speaks of in this discourse is a common Buddhist metaphor for someone who has reached a deep level of meditation, a person whose passions have all but disappeared. This meditative state, however, is not to be confused with a quietistic or blissful condition, which is simply a passing phase that may arise in spiritual practice.

The title could also be rendered as the "Song of the Dragon", since it is also used to describe a particularly forceful expression of the Dharma, one that sets the Wheel of the Dharma turning.

> Great Master Tōsu Daidō of Shuchou Province was once asked by a monk, "Does the roar of the Dragon exist even within a withered tree?"
>
> The Master replied, "As I would put it, the Lion's roar exists within one's skull."

Talk of withered trees and dead ashes is something taught by non-Buddhists. Even so, you need to distinguish between withered trees that non-Buddhists speak of and withered trees that Buddhists speak of. Even though non-Buddhists talk about withered trees, they do not know what a 'withered tree' is, much less would they actually hear the Dragon's roar. Non-Buddhists imagine that a withered tree is something dead or dying. They have been taught that such a tree cannot experience the springtime.

We explore through our training the 'withered tree' that the Buddhas and Ancestors speak of as 'the ocean having dried up'. 'The ocean having dried up' is synonymous with 'the tree having withered up' and 'the tree having withered up' is synonymous with its having encountered the Spring. The tree's being unwavering is a sign of its having withered.[1] Such trees as mountain trees, ocean trees, and sky

1. 'Unwavering' in this context means not being shaken by the arising of delusive thoughts.

trees are what withered trees are.[2] Their budding is the roar of the Dragon within a withered tree. Even those trees whose girth is measured in hundreds of thousands are offspring of some withered tree. Its form and its innate nature, its embodiment and the strength derived from its being withered comprise the long-lived withered trees which Buddhas and Ancestors speak of. At the same time, they go beyond being long-lived or short-lived. There are the trees of mountains and valleys, and there are the trees of fields and villages. The trees of mountains and valleys are conventionally called pines and cedars. The trees of fields and villages are conventionally called ordinary people and those in lofty positions. We explore through our training that those whose 'leaves grow from their roots' are called the Buddhas and Ancestors, and we explore the expression 'end and beginning here return unto the Source'.[3] What is just like this is the long Dharma body of withered trees and the short Dharma body of withered trees. Those who are not withered trees do not yet roar like a Dragon, and those who are not yet withered trees will not forget the sound of the Dragon. "How many times have I met the spring, my heart unswerving?" is the Dragon's song of one who is completely withered.[4] To be sure, this 'song' is not in the same category as the five tones in a conventional musical scale, but two or three of the Five Tones are in the sequence of the Dragon's song.

At the same time, by this monk's question, "Does the roar of the Dragon exist even within a withered tree?" it has been brought forth for the first time in immeasurable eons. It was his bringing forth his spiritual question. Tōsu's saying "As I would put it, the Lion's roar exists within one's skull" means "What place could there possibly be that is concealed from It?" And it means "We never rest from surrendering our self and from supporting others." And it means "Skulls are scattered everywhere in the fields." [5]

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2. This is a description of various types of meditators: mountain trees are those who are sitting as still as a mountain, ocean trees are those who are exploring the Depths, and sky trees are those who are exploring the Unbounded.

3. The quotations in this sentence come from the *Sandōkai*, a poem by our Thirty-fifth Ancestor, Sekitō Kisen, which is customarily recited every day in Zen Buddhist monasteries.

4. This quotation is from a poem by Daibai Hōjō, which Dōgen gives in full on page 387 of Discourse 29: On Ceaseless Practice (*Gyōji*).

5. That is, in the fields of training.

❀

Great Master Kyōgen Chikan was once asked by a monk, "What is the Way?"

The Master answered, "The singing of the Dragon amidst the withered trees."

The monk replied, "I don't understand."

The Master said, "It is the Eye in skulls."

Later, there was a monk who asked Sekisō, "Just what sort of thing is this 'singing of a dragon amidst withered trees?'"

Sekisō replied, "Even now, there is Its being tinged with delight."

The monk then asked, "Just what is that thing about 'eyes in skulls?'"

Sekisō replied, "Even now, there is Its being tinged with consciousness."

There was also a monk who asked Sōzan, "Just what sort of thing is this 'singing of a dragon amidst withered trees?'"

Sōzan replied, "Its bloodline has not been severed."

The monk then asked, "Well, just what is that thing about 'eyes in skulls?'"

Sōzan replied, "They are not completely dried out."

The monk then said, "Oh, I don't know about that! Are there any who can hear it?"

Sōzan replied, "There is not one person on the whole of the great earth who has not already heard It."

The monk retorted, "I'm not convinced. What verses does a dragon chant?"

Sōzan replied, "I do not know what those verses are, but those who do hear It bemoan the fact that others do not."[6]

6. These three short dialogues are typical of many kōan stories that involve a Master and someone identified only as a monk. The monk—presumably a novice—asks a question based on an attempt to understand some saying by an Ancestor from a commonplace, literal perspective, whereas the Master gives a response as if the monk had asked his or her question from a spiritual perspective. This is done to help the monk break through a

The hearers and the chanters that these monks were just now talking about do not come anywhere near to those who actually sing the Dragon's song, for this melody is what the Dragon Itself sings. Being amidst withered trees or in a skull are not referring to something inside or outside, nor are they a reference to self or other; they are referring to the 'What' that is here and now and to the 'What' that has always been of old. Its being tinged with delight even now is the horns on Its head coming forth. Its being tinged with consciousness even now is Its completely shedding Its skin.

Sōzan's saying, "Its bloodline has not been severed," means that the Way is not concealed and that, within the sphere of words, there is the turning around of self. "They are not completely dried out" means that the drying up of the ocean has not completely reached the bottom. Because the drying out has not achieved completion, there is drying going on atop the dryness. The monk's asking, "Are there any who can hear it?" implies "Are there any who cannot?" As to Sōzan's saying, "There is not one person on the whole of the great earth who has not already heard It," I should have liked to ask him, "Putting aside, for the moment, your remark about there being no one who has not already heard It, tell me, in the time before the whole earth sprang into existence, where was the roar of the Dragon then? Speak up! Quick, quick!"

"I'm not convinced. What verses does the Dragon chant?" is the question that needs answering for all our sakes. The roaring Dragon, quite naturally, is making vocal sounds and taking up the Great Matter* whilst in mud; this is Its taking in a breath through Its nostrils. "I do not know what those verses are" means that a Dragon exists within those verses. "Those who do hear It bemoan the fact that others do not" is sad indeed!

The roar of the Dragon that has now come forth through such Masters as Kyōgen, Sekisō, and Sōzan creates the clouds and makes the rain. It does not speak of the Way, nor does It speak of Eyes or skulls; it is just the thousands of songs, the myriad songs that the Dragon sings. Its still having delight is found in the croaking of bullfrogs, and Its still having consciousness is found in the mumbling of worms. Therefore, Its bloodline has not been severed; there is one gourd succeeding

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dependence on worldly ways of thinking. That is, in the above three cases the monks think that what they are quoting is somehow about mythical creatures called dragons, whereas the Masters are pointing the monks to a deeper meaning of the term 'Dragon', that is, they are pointing to one's innate Buddha Nature.

* See *Glossary.*

another.[7] Because Its skull is not completely dry, It is the chief pillar* of the temple from whose Womb is born the other pillars of the temple. It is the temple's main stone lantern* which is most conspicuous among all the stone lanterns in the temple.

Delivered to the assembly on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (February 5, 1244), whilst beneath Yamashibu Peak in Echizen Province.

Copied at Eihei-ji Monastery on the fifth day of the third lunar month in the second year of the Kōan era (April 17, 1279).

7. The gourd refers to a Master as a vessel for the Water of the Spirit, which is passed on through the Transmission.

64

On Spring and Autumn: Warming Up and Cooling Down

(Shunjū)

Translator's Introduction: This discourse is concerned with the teachings of Tōzan who, along with his Dharma heir, Sōzan, is considered a founding Ancestor of Dōgen's Sōtō tradition. Dōgen first presents a kōan story for which Tōzan was famous, one dealing with how to train with the opposites. He then makes mention of the *Five Positions* (J. *Goi*), in which Tōzan outlines the relationships between the transient and the Absolute—the Absolute within the transient, the transient within the Absolute, the transient itself, the Absolute itself, and the transient and Absolute in harmony. Dōgen quotes and critiques various Masters who have written poems expressing their understanding of both the story and the *Five Positions*. Since many of these poems contain Zen terms which would most likely have been understood in Dōgen's time but are unfamiliar to present-day Western readers, some effort has been made to clarify what these poems are pointing to, though Japanese scholarly commentators are not always certain of or in agreement as to the significance of some of the metaphors that the poem contains.

> Great Master Tōzan Ryōkai was once asked by a monk, "When cold or heat come our way, how are we to avoid them?"
>
> The Master replied, "Why don't you proceed to the place where there is no heat or cold?"
>
> The monk then asked, "What is that place where there is no heat or cold?"
>
> The Master answered, "When it is cold, my acharya,* give yourself up to the cold; when it is hot, my acharya, give yourself up to the heat."

Ever so many people in the past have given much thought to this dialogue, and many people in the present need to make every effort to train with it. The Buddhas and Ancestors have invariably come to explore it, and those who come to explore it are Buddhas and Ancestors. Many of the Indian and Chinese Buddhas and Ancestors in both the past and present have treated this story as an actual incidence of one's Original Nature manifesting. In this dialogue, Original Nature manifests as the spiritual question of Buddhas and Ancestors.

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* See *Glossary*.

At the same time, the monk's question, "When cold or heat come our way, how are we to avoid them?" needs to be examined in detail. It is your taking a good hard look through your training at the very moment when cold comes and at the very moment when heat comes. This cold and heat come from a cold and heat that are entirely cold and entirely hot. Since they come from cold and heat, when they do arrive, they have come from a head that thinks in terms of cold and hot, and they manifest from eyes that see in terms of cold and hot. Above this 'head' is the very place where there is no cold or hot. Within these 'eyes' is the very place where there is no cold or hot. The Great Ancestor's statement, "When it is cold, my acharya, give yourself up to the cold; when it is hot, my acharya, give yourself up to the heat," refers to what was happening at that very moment. Even though 'when it is cold' refers to his saying 'give yourself up to the cold', 'when it is hot' need not necessarily be his way of saying 'give yourself up to the heat'. 'Cold' is fundamentally and totally cold; 'heat' is fundamentally and totally hot. Even though we may have been able to avoid experiencing them on myriad occasions, this is still just exchanging the head for the tail. Cold is what the living Eye of the Ancestors of our tradition is; hot is what the warm skin of my late Master was.

❀

Meditation Master Tanka Shijun was the Dharma heir of the Venerable Monk Fuyō Dōkai. He once said:

> Among our monastic assembly, there are those who have deliberated among themselves and then made the assertion, "In this story, the monk's question has already sunk him into duality, whereas the Venerable Monk Tōzan's reply returns the matter to the position of the Absolute. Recognizing what is being sounded in Tōzan's words, the monk then enters into the position of the Absolute, whereas Tōzan now responds by stringing along with the dualistic position." Deliberating in this way, those who assert such a view not only slander the late, saintly Tōzan but they also disgrace themselves. Have you not encountered the saying, "When you listen to the explanations of ordinary people, they may call up pretty pictures in the mind—all in reds and greens—but even though these may be beautiful when before your eyes, after continued repetition, they will ultimately sicken you?"

> In general, my noble Buddhist travelers of the Way, if you wish to grasp this Great Matter,* you must first become conscious of this Highest Ancestor's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. The teachings uttered by the rest of those Ancestors of the Buddha are as meaningful as the sizzling sounds a cold bowl makes when hot water is poured into it. Even so, I dare to put it to you, what ultimately is the place that is without cold or heat? Do you understand?[1] A pair of kingfishers come to roost in the Jeweled Mansion, whereas the mandarin drake and his mate are allied with the Golden Palace.[2]

This Master is one of Tōzan's direct descendants, an outstanding personage in the seat of our Ancestors. As such, he rebukes the many who, dwelling within the cave of duality, bow down to our Founding Ancestor, Great Master Tōzan, for the wrong reason.[3] If the Buddha's Dharma had been Transmitted from such a position of duality, how could It possibly have ever come down to us today? Be they feral kittens or farmyard clowns, they have not yet been thoroughly trained within Tōzan's inner chambers. Folks who have never crossed the threshold into the day-to-day training with the Buddha's Dharma have erroneously asserted that Tōzan came in contact with people by applying such things as a dualistic five positions. This is barbarous and irresponsible talk, which you should not pay attention to. You should just thoroughly explore through your training that this superior Ancestor of yours was, by all means, in possession of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching.

❀

Meditation Master Wanshi Shōgaku of Mount Tendō in Chingyüan Prefecture was a Dharma heir of Abbot Tanka Shijun. He once said:

> When we discuss this matter which my Master Tanka has brought up, it is just like the two of us playing a game of *Go*. If you do not respond according to the move I made, I will have caught you off guard. If you experience that this is what has happened, you will

1. In accord with traditional Zen interpretations, these two questions could also be rendered as, "The 'What' is ultimately the place that is without cold or heat. Do you get It?"

2. The pairs of birds—one male, one female—are a metaphor for the opposites, in the present case cold and hot. They come to rest in That Place which is beyond the opposites, and which is 'experienced' by kingfishers as a jeweled mansion and by ducks as a golden palace.

3. That is, they do not grasp the true significance of Tōzan's teaching on the *Five Positions*, which ultimately transcends the duality of the transient and the Absolute.

be able to grasp Tōzan's intention right off. I cannot help but add the following comment in verse:

When he looked inside himself, there was no cold or hot,
For, in an instant, the vast ocean had dried up to its very last drop.
I say that I can catch the Great Turtle by just picking It up,[4]
But I can't help laughing as you go fishing for It in the sand.

For the moment, let's say that there is a game of *Go*. Well, how about these two players? If we call it 'a two-person game of *Go'*, there could be an eight-stone handicap. If there is an eight-stone handicap, it would hardly be a game of *Go*, would it? But if I were to describe it, it would be something like the following: the game of *Go* is simply a player and his opponent encountering each other. Be that as it may, you should keep in mind Wanshi's statement, "If you do not respond according to the move I made," focusing on it single-mindedly and, while cloaking yourself in it, make a thorough exploration of it. His saying "If you do not respond according to the move I made" is equivalent to his saying "You can never be me." Do not pass over his saying, "I will have caught you off guard." Within mud, there is the mud. The one who walks in it washes his feet, and also washes his chinstrap.[5] Within a pearl, there is the Pearl. When It is radiant, It illumines both oneself and others.

❀

Meditation Master Kassan Engo was a Dharma heir of Meditation Master Goso Hōen. He once said in verse:

The bowl sets the pearl to rolling and the pearl rolls in the bowl:
The transitory within the Absolute and the Absolute within the transitory.[6]
The antelope holds onto a tree branch by its horns, thereby leaving no trace.
When the hunting dogs circle the forest, uncertain, they seek it in vain.[7]

4. The Great Turtle is a metaphor for Buddha Nature.

5. That is, when you go through the mud of training to spiritually aid others, you do not stop at your ankles but go all the way up to your chin.

6. These two assertions are the first two of the five positions.

The expression here, "the bowl sets the pearl to rolling," is unprecedented and incomparable. It has rarely been heard in past or present. Hitherto, people have merely spoken as if the pearl rolling around in the bowl were something unceasing. The antelope is now using his horns to hang onto Emptiness, and the Forest is now circling the hunting dogs.

❀

Meditation Master Setchō Jukēn of Shishō Monastery in Keigen City was a Dharma heir of Venerable Abbot Chimon Kōso. He once said in verse:

The dangling of the Master's hands, on the contrary, is
like a veritable cliff ten thousand feet high.
Why do the transitory and the Absolute necessarily need
to be offered a fixed place?
When the bright moon illumines the ancient palace of
lapis lazuli,
The keen black hound, in eager pursuit, vainly bounds up
its stairs.[8]

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7. It is said that when the *reiyō* (C. *ling-yang*), a type of antelope, sleeps at night, it uses its horns to hoist itself up onto a tree branch. By keeping its legs above the ground, it leaves no trace of its whereabouts, so that hunting dogs cannot find it. This metaphor is used in Chinese Zen to describe someone who has dropped off body and mind, and thereby leaves no trace of an egocentric self for 'hunting dogs' to attack.

8. 'Dangling hands' refers to an ancient Chinese practice of raising children without using physical coercion. In Zen, it was used to refer to a Master's approach to training a disciple. Despite the seeming gentleness, it ultimately leads to the disciple ending up at the top of a high cliff, from which he needs to take responsibility for his actions and to step off in full faith. When taking such an action, he is no longer in the position of guest looking up to the Master (host position), but has assumed the host position (acting as a Master acts). This resembles the shift in the *Five Positions* from the perspective of the transitory to that of the Absolute. This is possible because the positioning of Master and disciple is not absolutely fixed.

   Until this shift takes place, the disciple is like a *kanro (C. han-lu),* a type of black hunting dog associated with a small state in China named Han that flourished during the era of the Warring States (440-221 BCE). This highly intelligent dog was used to hunt down rabbits. In the present poem, the last two lines could be paraphrased as the following: When Buddha Nature shines forth like the full moon, It illumines all transitory things. A disciple, one who is as keen as a hunting dog, may attempt to pursue the Buddha Nature, but becomes

Setchō Jukēn was a third generation Dharma heir of Ummon. He could be described as a skin bag* who knew the full satisfaction of having awakened. In saying "The dangling of the Master's hands, on the contrary, is like a veritable cliff ten thousand feet high," he reveals an extraordinarily wondrous standard. Even so, dangling hands may not necessarily be as he describes. The present account of the monk asking Tōzan what he was pointing to is not necessarily about hands dangling or hands not dangling or about renouncing the world or not renouncing the world. Even less does it make use of expressions about the transitory and the Absolute. It is as though people could not lay a hand on this story without making use of the perspective of the transitory and the Absolute. It is like their not having been led by the nose to pay a visit to their Master to ask for instruction and, consequently, they do not arrive at the border of our Founding Ancestor's domain. They therefore fail to catch sight of the great ones of the Buddha Dharma in our monastic family. What is more, they should gather up their straw sandals and go pay visits to other Masters. And they should stop going around slandering the Buddha Dharma of our Founding Ancestor by saying that It is limited to the five positions of the Absolute and the transitory.

❀

Meditation Master Chōrei Shutaku of Tennei Monastery in the Eastern Capital once said in verse:

Within the relative, there is the Absolute; within the Absolute, the transitory,
As centuries by the thousands have drifted by within the human realm.
How many times have I desired to go back, yet have not been able to turn back time.
Before my gate, as of old, how luxuriant the weeds!

Though he also gave full expression to the transitory and the Absolute, nevertheless he has picked up on something. Without denying that he has picked up on something, what is It that exists within the transitory?

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confused and mistakes the illumined palace of lapis lazuli (the transitory) for what is Real (the Absolute, represented by the Moon) and vainly chases after that.

❀

Abbot Busshō Hōtai of Mount Daii in Tanchou Province was a Dharma heir of Engo. He once said in verse:

For my sake as a monk, you, Tōzan, showed me the place
beyond cold and hot,
And once again a dead tree brought forth a blossom.
People who scratch a mark on their boat in order to
locate their sword are laughable indeed![9]
To this very day they are still among the cold ashes.

This expression of his has a bit of the ability to activate one's spiritual question and to pierce right through it.

❀

Meditation Master Tandō Bunjun of Rokutan once said in verse:

At times of heat, you gave yourself up to heat and, at
times of cold, you gave yourself up to cold.
You did not involve yourself with the whys and
wherefores of cold and heat.
Having done the practice until you saw what the whole
wide world really is and remembering what
worldly matters really are,
Your head, my dear Master Tōzan, was crowned with a
boar's-hide cap.[10]

So, right now, let me ask, what for heaven's sake does he mean by not involving himself? Quickly say! Quickly spit it out!

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9. An allusion to a story in the Chinese classic, *Spring and Autumn Chronicles*, from which the title of this discourse derives. A man once lost his sword while sailing down a river. He made a scratch on the side of his boat to mark the spot where the sword fell overboard. Despite his efforts to retrieve the sword by looking for it beneath the place where he had scratched, he failed to find it, as the boat had drifted downstream.

10. 'Master', here, refers to someone who is beyond 'heat and cold', someone who is at one with True Nature. 'The boar's-hide cap' refers to that which is both hot and cold, since it keeps the head warm when the weather is cold. The transitory heat and cold simply ride above his True Nature.

❀

Meditation Master Kazan Shujun of Huchou Province was a Dharma heir of Zen Master Taihei Bukkan Egon. He once said in verse:

> *The place beyond cold and hot is what Tōzan spoke of,*
> *But ever so many meditators wander off from there.*
> *When it is cold, I just huddle by the fire; when it is hot, I take advantage of whatever is cool.*
> *All my life, I have been able to escape, warding off both cold and heat.*

Although this Master is a Dharma grandson of Meditation Master Goso Hōen, his words are like those of a small child. Even so, his saying "All my life, I have been able to escape, warding off both cold and heat" shows promise of his becoming an excellent Master later on. His saying 'all my life' means 'with my whole being' and 'warding off both cold and heat' means 'dropping off body and mind'.

Speaking more generally, even though there have been monastics from ever so many districts and ever so many generations who have beat their drum on both sides, making offerings of eulogies to the ancients, they have not yet caught even a glimpse of what our Founding Ancestor Tōzan was talking about. Were you to ask why, it is because they have not known what 'cold' and 'hot' mean in the everyday life of an Ancestor of the Buddha. So indeed, they vainly speak of huddling by the fire and of taking advantage of whatever is cool. The more the pity that you, Shujun, even though living amidst venerable senior monks, did not hearken to what 'cold' and 'heat' meant. How regrettable that what our Ancestral Master Tōzan said has been abandoned! When we truly know the forms of this 'cold' and 'hot', and have passed through periods of 'cold' and 'hot', and have continually made use of 'cold' and 'hot', it is then that we should make eulogies to the ancients and make commentaries on what our Founding Ancestor Tōzan's words were pointing to for our sakes. Those who have not gone this far cannot even compare with those who know their own shortcomings. Even the worldly are aware of the sun and moon and rely upon the myriad things that arise. And they distinguish among themselves between those who are saintly and those who are wise, as well as between those who are gentle folk and those who are foolish people. Do not make a mistake and mix up the 'cold and hot' that Buddhas speak of with the 'cold and hot' of foolish people. You need simply to be diligent in your practice forthwith.

Delivered to the assembly a second time in the second year of the Kangen era (1244), whilst deep in the mountains of Echizen Province.

I was expounding to the monks the teaching of revolving the Buddhist "Kirin Sutra" when one encounters a Buddha.[11] *As an Ancestral Master once said, "Although there may be many in the assembly who have sprouted a horn, one kirin will suffice."*[12]

11. The *Kirin Sutra* is an alternative name for the *Spring and Autumn Chronicles*, the only work directly attributed to Confucius. Dōgen may be expounding what he considers to be a Buddhist equivalent of that text. The *kirin (C. ch'i-lin)* is a fabulous, auspicious beast, considered to be the Far East equivalent of a unicorn. It has the body of a deer, the tail of an ox, the hooves of a horse, and one fleshy horn, with the hair on its back of varied colors and yellow hair on its stomach. It is a metaphor for a Dharma heir who is highly skilled in innumerable means to help others to realize the Truth.

12. This saying by Seigen Gyōshi means that it is fine to have many extraordinary disciples, but having just one Dharma heir will suffice.

65

On Why Our Ancestral Master Came from the West

(Soshi Seirai I)

Translator's Introduction: This short discourse focuses on the question that each trainee is presumably keeping in mind at all times: why have I come to train? This is the spiritual question that permeates everything that the trainee is doing. It is what the trainee needs to get his teeth into and to hold onto, like someone holding onto the branch of a tree with his mouth as he dangles over a thousand foot cliff. It is the Great Matter of life and death, the willingness to risk life and limb in order to realize the Truth.

> Great Master Kyōgen Chikan was a Dharma heir of Great Master Isan Reiyū. He once said to his assembly, "Imagine someone climbing up a tree at the edge of a thousand-foot-high cliff.[1] He grabs hold of a branch with his mouth, since he cannot get a hold with his feet and he is unable to pull himself up with his hands. Just at that moment, a man at the bottom of the tree asks him, 'Why did Bodhidharma come from the West?' At such a time, were he to open his mouth to answer the man, he would lose his grip and forfeit his life. Were he not to answer, he would make a mistake due to the nature of what was asked.[2] Speak up! What, for goodness sake, should he do at such a time?"
>
> At that moment, a novice monk named Kotō Shō came forth from the assembly and said, "I have no question about the time when the man has gone up the tree but, Venerable Monk, please tell me, what about the time before he has climbed the tree?"
>
> The Master thereupon broke out in uproarious laughter.

Although this dialogue has sparked many discussions and commentaries, few of them have expressed its essence. I am afraid that people, by and large, have been bewildered by it. Even so, in thinking about it, if you make use of 'not deliberately thinking about it', as well as of 'not deliberately thinking about anything', your

1. 'Climbing a tree' is a metaphor for doing one's training and practice.
2. That is, by not answering a spiritual question, he would be acting contrary to the Bodhisattva vow to spiritually help all sentient beings.

efforts on your meditation cushion will naturally be like those of our dear old friend Kyōgen.[3] When you sit as still as a mountain on your own cushion, as our dear friend Kyōgen has already done, you too will be exploring this dialogue in detail with him, even though he has not yet opened his mouth. Not only will you be making free use of our dear Kyōgen's Eye to look upon the dialogue, but you will also be using It to break through and see the meaning of Shakyamuni Buddha's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching.

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> Imagine someone climbing up a tree at the edge of a thousand-foot-high cliff.

We need to thoroughly explore these words in a quiet manner. Who is it that he is calling a 'someone'? We should not say that whoever is not a temple pillar* must necessarily be called 'a piece of lumber'. Even though it was the exalted face of the Buddha along with the face of our Great Ancestor Makakashō that broke into smiles, we should not overlook the fact that we ourselves, as well as others, can also experience this mutual recognition. The place where the person was climbing up the tree was not the whole of the great earth, nor was it the top of a hundred-foot pole. It was a thousand-foot-high cliff. Even should the climber fall off the tree, it would still be within the context of a thousand-foot-high cliff. There are times when one falls and there are times when one climbs. In saying "Imagine someone climbing up a tree at the edge of a thousand-foot-high cliff," we need to recognize that we are saying that there is a time when one is climbing. During that time, the climber is a thousand feet up and it is a thousand feet down. It is a thousand feet on the left and it is a thousand feet on the right. It is also a thousand feet from here and a thousand feet from there. Such a climber, as well as the tree being climbed, is also a thousand feet. The foregoing thousand feet will be just like this. Were you to ask me, "Just how much is a thousand feet," I would answer, "It is like the diameter of the Old Mirror, like the width of the Fireplace, or like the height of a monk's Seamless Stupa." [4]

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3. The two methods Dōgen is recommending derive from a narrative concerning Abbot Yakusan Igen, which Dōgen quotes at the beginning of Discourse 26: On Wanshi's 'Kindly Advice for Doing Seated Meditation' (*Zazen Shin*).

* See *Glossary.*

4. That is, like the three examples, it is beyond measure. The 'Old Mirror' refers to the whole universe which, although limitless, constantly reflects the activity of our own mind. The 'Fireplace' is immeasurable because, when the fires of karmic consequence arise, the size of

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He grabs hold of a branch with his mouth.

Just what is this 'mouth'? Even if we do not know the expanse of the whole Mouth itself, we may, just for the present, discover the whereabouts of the Mouth by moving along a branch of the tree, thoroughly exploring the branch by nipping off its leaves. It may be that by the very act of gripping the branch of the tree, his Mouth has taken form. Consequently, the whole of his Mouth is the tree: the whole of the tree is his Mouth. His whole body, through and through, is his Mouth: his whole Mouth, through and through, is his body. Because the tree already has a hold on itself, the Master said that the man's feet could not get a hold on the tree, which is like saying that the man's feet could not get a hold on his own feet. Because the branches are pulling themselves up with their branches, the Master said that the man was unable to pull himself up with his hands, which is like his saying that the man's hands were pulling his own hands up. Even so, his feet still go forward and back, and his hands still make a fist and open a fist.[5] Now, people may well think of the man as dangling in space, but how could dangling in space be an improvement on grabbing hold of a branch with his Mouth?

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Just at that moment, a man at the bottom of the tree asks him, "Why did Bodhidharma come from the West?"

To say that there was a person at the bottom of the tree at that moment is as if the Master had said that there was a person who was inside the tree, as if there was something called a 'human tree'. To say that underneath the climber at that very moment there was a human being who was asking a question would be to express that very thing. Accordingly, it is 'a tree asking a tree' and 'a man asking a man'. It is 'the whole tree itself asking the whole question' and 'the whole intent behind Bodhidharma coming from the West' asking 'why he came from the West'. The one who is asking the question is the very Mouth grabbing hold of a branch and then asking. If the Mouth were not grabbing hold of the branch, there could be no asking of a question, nor any voice to fill the mouth, nor any mouth that was filled

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the fireplace is irrelevant in the face of the pain experienced. In construction and sewing, measurements are made along the seams of an object; therefore, a 'Seamless Stupa' is beyond our ability to measure.

5. That is, even though the trainee may not yet have awakened fully, he may still be able to give expression to the Truth.

with speech. When we truly ask why Bodhidharma came from the West, we ask by getting our teeth into why he came from the West.

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> Were he to open his mouth to answer the man, he would lose his grip and forfeit his life.

Now you need to become intimately familiar with the words, "Were he to open his mouth to answer the man, he would lose his grip and forfeit his life." It sounds at first as if the man could actually answer the other without opening his mouth. If this were really the case, he would not lose his grip and forfeit his life. Even though he has the choice between opening his mouth and not opening it, this choice will not interfere with his Mouth's ability to grab hold of the tree branch. Opening and closing are not necessarily the only functions of the Mouth, and the mouth is capable of both opening and closing. Thus, grabbing hold of the branch is the everyday behavior of our whole Mouth and it will not interfere with the mouth's opening and closing. Is 'opening one's mouth to answer another' the same as 'disgorging the tree branch to answer another' or the same as 'disclosing the intent behind Bodhidharma's coming from the West to answer another'? If the climber does not disclose the intent behind 'Bodhidharma's coming from the West' in order to answer another, then he is not answering the question that was asked.

Not to have answered another is to grasp hold of life with one's whole being; it cannot be called 'losing one's grip and forfeiting one's life'.[6] And if one has already released his grip and forfeited his life, there will not be any answering of the question. Even so, Kyōgen's heart did not refuse to answer others; in all likelihood he had already loosened his grip and forfeited his life. Keep in mind that when we refuse to answer others, we are protecting ourselves and holding onto our life. When we answer in a flash, we turn ourselves around spiritually and activate our True Life. Clearly, what fills the mouth of each and every person is the Truth. We should answer others, and we should answer ourselves; we should ask others, and we should ask ourselves. This is our Mouth holding onto the Truth, for it is our Mouth holding onto the Truth that Kyōgen calls 'holding onto the branch'. When you give your answer to others, you open the Mouth within your mouth. If you do not answer them, even though this may not be in accord with what they are asking, it will be in accord with what you yourself are asking.

So, you need to realize that all the Buddhas and Ancestors have both asked and answered the question as to why Bodhidharma came from the West, and They

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6. That is, it cannot be called 'dropping off body and mind'.

have all experienced the moment of being up a tree holding onto a branch with Their Mouth, and They all continue to give the answer.

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The Venerable Abbot Setchō Jūken once said in verse:

It is easy to speak while high up a tree,
It is hard to speak while beneath a tree,
This old monk has climbed that tree,
So come on, ask your question!

Now, in response to his "Come on, ask your question!" it would be so sad if you were to employ all your strength and then ask your question too late, for your question will have come after his answer. Let me ask all the old sharp ones of past and present, "Is Kyōgen's uproarious laughter what he uttered whilst up the tree, or is it what he uttered whilst beneath the tree? Does it answer why Bodhidharma came from the West or not?" Let's see if you can give it a try!

Delivered to the assembly on the fourth day of the second lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (March 14, 1244), whilst deep in the mountains of Echizen Province.

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66

On the Udumbara Blossom

(Udonge)

Translator's Introduction: The udumbara tree is said to bloom once every three thousand years. It is used to illustrate how rare it is for a Buddha such as Shakyamuni to appear in the world, though many other Buddhas will arise as a result of Shakyamuni's awakening. Although there is a Buddhist tradition that understands His holding the udumbara blossom aloft as a literal fact, there is another tradition which understands this as His holding aloft the flowering of His Buddha Nature for all to see, and that His disciple Makakashō's breaking into a smile of recognition was his way of displaying his own Buddha Nature. All the others who were present on that occasion apparently assumed that only Shakyamuni Buddha could have Buddha Nature, whereas no one else could possibly have It.

> Before an assembly of millions on Vulture Peak, the World-honored One held aloft an udumbara flower, His eyes atwinkle. At that time, Makakashō's face broke into a smile. The World-honored One then said, "I have the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, and I bestow It on Makakashō."

Just as all other Buddhas have done, the Seven Buddhas* have likewise held aloft the Flower. Through Their practice and awakening, They too have manifested the raising and holding aloft of Their Flower.

Thus, Their holding the Flower aloft encompasses the picking up of all Flowers by all Buddhas together, regardless of whether the Flowers are being raised or lowered, whether done in recognition of one's own Buddha Nature or of other's, whether pointing within or pointing without. This is the measure of the Flower, the measure of a Buddha, the measure of a mind, the measure of a body. No matter how many times the Flower has been held aloft, each instance has been a Transmitting of Truth to each and every genuine Dharma heir, for this is the very essence of Transmission. Once the Buddha held His Flower aloft, He never parted from It. And once the Flower held aloft the World-honored One, at that moment the World-honored One became the Flower's Dharma heir. Because the time when one's Flower is held aloft is the whole of time, the whole of time is in harmony both with the World-honored One and with the holding aloft of one's Flower.

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* See *Glossary*.

'The holding aloft of one's Flower' is the Flower holding the flower aloft; it is represented by such things as the plum blossom, the spring blossoms, the snow-covered blossoms, and the lotus blossom. The five petals displayed by the plum blossom are the more than three hundred and sixty other assemblies wherein He voiced the Dharma, the five thousand and forty-eight volumes of the Scriptures, the Three Vehicles,* the twelve divisions of the Canon, and the bodhisattva* stage of being 'thrice wise and ten times saintly'.* Accordingly, it is beyond the stage of just being thrice wise and ten times saintly. The Great Treasure House with Its extraordinary wonders exists, about which it is said, "When the Flower comes into bloom, the whole world arises." We call the effects of the five petals which open together as one flower 'the natural realization of the Truth', for it is the whole of oneself already being adorned with the whole of one's Self. Reiun Shingon's losing his worldly eyes upon seeing peach blossoms and Kyōgen Chikan's having his worldly hearing disappear at the sound of a pebble striking against a cane of bamboo are instances of their holding the Flower aloft. Great Master Eka's standing waist deep in snow and 'cutting off' his arm, and then later doing prostrations after having realized what Bodhidharma's Marrow is, was the natural opening of his Flower.[1] Enō's pounding rice in a stone mortar until it was purely white and then receiving Daiman Kōnin's kesa* in the middle of the night demonstrated his having already held the Flower aloft. Examples such as these are the roots of Life itself being held within the hands of the World-honored One.

Speaking more generally, holding the Flower aloft already existed before the World-honored One had realized the Truth, and it existed at the same time as the World-honored One's realizing the Truth, and it continues to exist even after the World-honored One's realization of the Truth. Accordingly, the Flower <u>is</u> the realizing of the Truth. The holding of the Flower aloft goes far beyond these divisions of time. The Buddhas' and Ancestors' giving rise to the intention to realize the Truth, Their taking a first step, Their practicing until They awoke, and Their preserving the Truth well have all been instances of Flowers being held aloft, dancing like butterflies on the breezes of spring. Thus, because the World-honored Gautama put His Body into a Flower and concealed His Body within Space, we call His ability to grab hold of His Nose and to grab hold of Unbounded Space 'His holding aloft His Flower'. Holding aloft the Flower is holding It aloft with one's Eye, holding It aloft with the consciousness of one's mind, holding It aloft with one's Nose, and holding It aloft by one's holding aloft a flower.

1. This reference to Eka's cutting off his arm may refer to giving up one's attachments rather than to a literal, physical act.

Generally speaking, the great earth with its mountains and rivers, as well as the sun, moon, wind, and rain, along with humans and animals, grasses and trees, are all being held aloft. Namely, they are the holding aloft of the udumbara flower. Birth and death, coming and going, are also varieties of the Flower. Indeed, they are the brilliant radiance of the Flower. When we explore the Matter* in this way, we continue to hold our Flower aloft.

The Buddha once said, "It is like the udumbara flower, which All of Us love and delight in." His saying 'All' refers to Buddhas and Ancestors, both those who reveal Themselves and Those who do not. Theirs is a presence of brilliant radiance, one which grasses and trees, insects and bugs inherently possess. All of us who love this radiance and delight in it describe it as the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of all beings as they go about like fish freely disporting in the water. Hence, each and every one of us is ultimately an udumbara blossom, a condition that some call 'being rare indeed'!

'His eyes atwinkle' describes the occasion when the Buddha was sitting in meditation at the base of the Bodhi tree and He exchanged His worldly eyes for the brightness of the Morning Star. And there was the occasion when Makakashō's face broke into a smile. He had already broken into the smile, exchanging it for the face of one who was holding his Flower aloft. At that moment when the Tathagata's eyes twinkled, we quickly lost our worldly eyes. This twinkling of the Tathagata's eyes was His holding the Flower aloft. The udumbara blossom signifies the natural opening up of one's heart.

At the very moment of the flower being held aloft, all Gautamas, all Makakashōs, all sentient beings, all of us, all together, are extending our hands and holding our Flower aloft, and this practice has not ceased even to the present day. Further, because we are in a meditative state in which our whole being keeps itself within our hands, we call this 'being' the four elements* and the five skandhas.*[2]

The Buddha's 'what I have' refers to what He bestows on others and what He confers becomes their 'what I have'.[3] Of necessity, what is given is restricted to what it is that He has.

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2. 'Our whole being keeps itself within our hands' refers to our focusing our consciousness within our hands, which are being held in the traditional manner while doing seated meditation.

3. Namely, the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana.

Your 'what I have' is your crowning glory. When you hold your 'what I have' aloft and exchange it, in turn, for 'what I give you,' you are keeping to the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. Bodhidharma's coming from the West was his coming to hold the Flower aloft. His holding the Flower aloft is called his delighting in single-minded pursuit of the Way. Delighting in single-minded pursuit of the Way means just control yourself and sit there, dropping off body and mind. Becoming a Buddha or an Ancestor is called delighting in single-minded pursuit of the Way, and putting on one's clothes and eating one's meals is also called delighting in single-minded pursuit of the Way. In short, the most important matter for Buddhas and Ancestors is, without doubt, delighting in single-minded pursuit of the Way.

When those in the Buddha Hall mutually encounter each other spiritually and when those in the Monks' Hall also encounter each other spiritually, they all become more and more endowed with variety in their flowerings, and these flowerings become ever more intense in their hues.[4] And what is more, within the Monks' Hall the wooden *han* is now taken and struck, reverberating to the clouds, while in the Buddha Hall the bamboo *shō* is now blown, reverberating to the bottom of the water.[5] At just such times, my late Master might inadvertently begin to recite a melodious poem about plum blossoms, such as the following:

> *When Gautama lost his worldly eyes,*
> *Only a single branch of plum blossoms appeared amidst the snow.*
> *Now everywhere new branches have sprung up*
> *And, laughing, I delight in the spring wind's scattering petals in wild disarray.*

The Tathagata's worldly eyes have inadvertently become a Plum Blossom, while the plum blossoms have now become thorny twigs, sprouting up everywhere. The Tathagata keeps His True Self hidden within His Eye, and His Eye keeps Its True Self hidden within the plum blossom, and the plum blossoms keep their True Self

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4. The Buddha Hall is the place in the monastery where ceremonies are performed, with senior monks doing the performing. Thus, 'those in the Buddha Hall' is associated with senior monks and 'those in the Monks' Hall' is associated with novices.

5. A *han* is a wooden plate, or block, that is struck like a gong, whereas the *shō* is an organ-like wind instrument, producing dense, reedy chords. The clouds (J. *un*) and water (J. *sui*) refer to novice monks, who are commonly called *unsui.* Such reverberant, penetrating instrumental sounds are employed in monasteries to aid trainees in shaking themselves free from holding onto body and mind.

hidden within the thorny twigs. The plum blossoms, in response, are now blowing in the spring breeze. Even though this is how things are, it is in peach blossoms that my Master took his delight and joy.

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My late Master, the Old Buddha Tendō, once said in verse,

What Reiun saw were peach blossoms opening:[6]
What I see are peach blossoms scattering.

Keep in mind that the opening of peach blossoms is what Reiun saw. He expressed it in his poem as, "And straightaway—at that very moment—I arrived, never again to be in doubt." The falling of the petals of the peach blossoms is what Tendō himself saw. The opening of peach blossoms is aroused by the breezes of spring. These winds abhor the scattering of the blossoms' petals. Even though the spring winds abhor the peach blossoms scattering thus, this scattering may well equate with the dropping off of body and mind.

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Copied on the sixth day of the second lunar month in the third year of Shōwa (February 20, 1314).

6. The reference to Reiun Shigon is to his poem that capped his kenshō:

Thirty years I sought for Him, the Good Friend with His Sword of Wisdom:
For so many rounds have the leaves fallen and the branches burst anew with blooms!
But just one glance at those peach blossoms
And straightaway—at that very moment—I arrived, never again to be in doubt.

67

On Giving Rise to the Unsurpassed Mind

(Hotsu Mujō Shin)

Translator's Introduction: This discourse was given on the same day as was Discourse 85: On Giving Rise to the Enlightened Mind (*Hotsu Bodai Shin*). Considering the passage that describes how alms should be given to monastics, it is likely that this talk was given for Dōgen's lay disciples.

An important aspect of this discourse is Dōgen's opening remarks concerning metaphors, which offers a clue as to his use of such terms as a blade of grass, trees, tiles, stones, fences, walls, stupas, images of Buddhas, and Buddhas, all of which can readily be understood as references to what is experienced in terms of training disciples.

Our Highest Ancestor in India, Shakyamuni Buddha, once said, "The snow-capped Himalayas are a metaphor for the great nirvana." You need to know that He is speaking metaphorically about something that can be metaphoric. 'Something that can be metaphoric' implies that the mountains and nirvana are somehow intimately connected and that they are connected in a straightforward manner. When He uses the term 'snow-capped Himalayas', He is using the actual snow-capped Himalayas as a metaphor, just as when He uses the term 'great nirvana', He is using the actual great nirvana as a metaphor.

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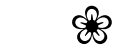
Our First Ancestor in China, Bodhidharma, once said, "Any mind and all minds are like trees and stones." 'Mind' here means 'mind just as it is'. It is the mind that encompasses the whole of the great earth. Therefore, it is the mind of self and the mind of other. Any mind and all minds—those of ordinary worldly humans, those of the Buddhas and Ancestors of the whole universe in all ten directions, those of celestial and demonic beings, among others—are precisely like trees and stones, and there is no mind apart from this. These 'trees and stones' are not made captive by the bonds of 'existence versus non-existence' or 'emptiness versus form'. By means of this mind of trees and stones, we give rise to the Mind that both seeks the Way and does the practice to awaken to It, because these are the trees of our Mind and the stones of our Mind. With the aid of these trees and stones of our Mind, we bring forth what we are thinking about here and now based upon not deliberately thinking about anything in particular. Not until we have

encountered what our tradition voices concerning the trees and stones of our Mind can we go beyond the various teachings that non-Buddhists propagate. Before then, we are not on the Buddha's Way.



The National Teacher Echū once said, "The tiles* and stones of our walls and fences are precisely what the mind of Old Buddhas is." We should investigate in detail where, precisely, these tiles and stones of our walls and fences are, and we need to ask ourselves what it is that has appeared in this manner. 'The mind of Old Buddhas' is not something in the far-off fields of the Lord of Emptiness.* It is being satisfied with the morning gruel and being satisfied with the noontime meal. It is being satisfied with the grass and being satisfied with the water.[1] To treat your mind in this way and to sit like a Buddha and act like a Buddha is called 'giving rise to the mind that seeks Buddhahood'. Speaking more generally, the causes and conditions for giving rise to the enlightened Mind do not come from any other place than the mind that seeks to be enlightened, for it is our very mind that is giving rise to the intention to search for Buddhahood. What we call 'giving rise to the mind that seeks to be enlightened' is the offering of a single blade of grass and thereby creating a Buddha, and it is the offering of a rootless tree and thereby creating a Scripture. It is giving alms to a Buddha by offering a handful of sand, and it is giving alms to a Buddha by offering rice water. It is offering a ball of rice to some sentient being or offering five flowers to the Tathagata. To practice some bit of good at the suggestion of another, and to do bows to the Buddha upon having been annoyed by some demon, these too are our giving rise to the mind that seeks to be enlightened. Not only that, it is knowing that one's family home is not one's True Home, and so forsaking home life, leaving family behind in order to enter a mountain monastery and practice the Way, either by relying on faith or upon one's understanding. It is to fashion images of Buddhas and to fashion stupas.* It is to read the Scriptures and to keep the name of Buddha in mind. It is to give expression to the Dharma for the sake of all beings. It is to seek out a True Master and inquire of the Way. It is to sit in full lotus position, to bow to the Three Treasures, and to make "Homage to the Buddha" one's sole invocation.

The causes and conditions of the eighty thousand aggregates that make up the whole of the Dharma, as the preceding statements have expressed, are

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* See *Glossary.*

1. Being satisfied with the grass and water describes a domesticated water buffalo, a metaphor for the contentment experienced by a well-trained and awakened trainee.

positively due to giving rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood. There are those who have given rise to the intention in their sleep while dreaming and have realized Buddhahood. And there are those who have given rise to the intention while in a drunken stupor and have realized Buddhahood. And there are those who have given rise to the intention and realized Buddhahood amidst flying flower petals or falling leaves. And there are those who have given rise to the intention and realized Buddhahood amidst peach blossoms or a bamboo grove. And there are those who have given rise to the intention and realized Buddhahood while high in the heavens. And there are those who have given rise to the intention and realized Buddhahood while deep within the ocean. In all these cases, they have given rise to the mind of enlightenment whilst within the enlightened Mind and have given rise to the mind of enlightenment whilst within body and mind. All Buddhas have given rise to an enlightened Mind whilst within body and mind, and They have given rise to an enlightened Mind whilst within the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of the Buddha's Ancestor, Bodhidharma.

Thus, our present-day fashioning of such things as stupas and images of Buddhas is undoubtedly due to our giving rise to our enlightened Mind; it is our giving rise to the intention to reach Buddhahood forthwith and without giving up midway. This spiritually beneficial activity is free of any attachments. It is a meritorious activity that is free of any striving. It enables us to see the True Nature of all things. This is seeing Dharma Nature. It is the meditative state that beckons to all the Buddhas. It is the invocation that finds all the Buddhas. It is the supreme, fully enlightened Mind. It is the fruition of arhathood.* It is the full manifestation of Buddhahood. Apart from this, there is no other method that is free of all attachments and free of any striving.

At the same time, there are befuddled folks of the Lesser Course* who say:

> To fashion images of the Buddha and raise stupas is to undertake activities that involve attachments. We should put them aside and not engage in them. Bringing a halt to the functioning of the worldly, selfish mind and developing a tranquil spirit is what being free of attachments means. Being free from the cycle of arising and decay and being free from striving is what Reality is. Training oneself single-mindedly to see the Ultimate Reality of Buddha Nature is to be free of attachments.

Talking in this way, they have made this their customary, worldly way of study in India and China in both the past and the present. Accordingly, they do not fashion images or raise stupas, even though they have been fostering serious breakages of Precepts. Caught in the thickets of sensory defilements, they sully themselves, yet

they fail to keep the name of Buddha in mind or to read the Scriptures. These are folks who have not only ruined their spiritual potential, which all humans of any sort have, but they have also dismissed out-of-hand the Buddha Nature of the Tathagata. Truly, how pitiful that at a time when they have encountered Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, they have become sworn enemies of these Three Treasures. Though they have climbed on the mountain of the Three Treasures, they have returned empty-handed; though they have entered the ocean of the Three Treasures, they have returned empty-handed. Even were they to encounter a thousand Buddhas and ten thousand Ancestors coming into the world, there would be no hope of their realizing enlightenment, for they have lost the means for giving rise to that intention. Their situation is like this because they have not followed what is written in the Scriptures or followed a reliable spiritual guide. The situation of many people is like this because they are following non-Buddhist ways and false teachers. You should quickly discard views and opinions such as "Fashioning such things as stupas has nothing to do with attaining spiritual wisdom." Wash your mind clean, wash your body clean, wash your ears clean, wash your eyes clean, and you will neither look at nor pay attention to such views and opinions. Just follow the teachings of the Buddha, follow good spiritual guides, keep coming back to the True Teaching, and explore through your training with your Master what the Buddha Dharma is.

In the Great Way of the Buddha Dharma, the Scriptures of the whole universe exist within a single mote of dust, and all the Buddhas beyond measure exist within a single mote of dust. There is not a tree or a blade of grass that is separate from our body and mind. When the myriad thoughts and things do not arise, our whole mind also does not arise, and since this is the True Form of all thoughts and things, It is the true form of every single mote of dust. Accordingly, our whole mind is all thoughts and things, and all thoughts and things are our whole mind, our whole being. If there were a time when such things as fashioning stupas involved attachments, then the enlightenment that is the fruit of Buddhahood and the Buddha Nature, which is what is real, would also involve attachments. Because that which is real, namely, the Buddha Nature, is not involved in attachments, the fashioning of Buddhist images and the raising of stupas likewise do not involve attachments. Buddha Nature is the mind that is free of attachments and whose intention is to realize Buddhahood; it is the meritorious activity that is free of attachments and free of delusions. You should firmly trust and understand that such things as the fashioning of Buddhist images and the raising of stupas are simply a manifestation of the mind that seeks enlightenment. Such efforts to fulfill the wish to help rescue all sentient beings have been fostered over millions of eons, for they are the giving rise to the intention to realize

Buddhahood over millions and millions of eons. We call this encountering Buddha and hearkening to His Teaching.

You need to keep in mind that gathering wood and stones, collecting up mud and earth, gathering gold and silver, as well as the seven precious jewels,* in order to fashion an image of the Buddha or to raise a stupa, and the gathering up of one's whole mind in order to fashion a stupa or fashion an image are our piling the Boundless upon the boundless to create a Buddha, our holding aloft the Mind of the mind to fashion a Buddha, our piling a stupa upon the Stupa to fashion a stupa, our making manifest the Buddhahood of a Buddha to fashion a Buddha. This is why the *Lotus Scripture* says, "When we pay attention to such matters, all the Buddhas in the ten quarters appear." Understand that when one person realizes Buddhahood by paying attention to such matters, all the Buddhas in the ten quarters appear by paying attention to such matters. And when one person realizes Buddhahood by one thought or thing, it is all thoughts and things realizing Buddhahood.

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Shakyamuni Buddha once said, "When I saw the morning star emerge, I was enlightened simultaneously with the whole of the great earth and all its sentient beings." Accordingly, giving rise to the intention, doing the training and practice, awakening, and realizing nirvana will be giving rise to the intention, doing the training and practice, awakening, and realizing nirvana, and all at the same time. The body and mind of which the Buddha spoke encompasses grasses and trees, tiles and stones, as well as wind and rain, water and fire. Finding ways to make use of these in order to help realize what the Buddha said is precisely what giving rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood is. Fashion your stupas and your images of Buddha by taking hold of the Unbounded, and fashion your images of Buddha and your stupas by using both your hands to scoop up Water from the mountain stream, for such actions are your giving rise to supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. And so, throughout hundreds of thousands of myriad eons, this is how one person's giving rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood manifests, which is the same as doing the training and awakening to the Truth.

At the same time, when you hear that giving rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood is a one-time thing, after which one does not experience the rising of the intention again, and that even though one's training and practice are beyond measure, the fruits of awakening are a one-time event, you are not hearing the Buddha Dharma, you are not comprehending the Buddha Dharma, you are not encountering the Buddha Dharma. The intention that arises in the mind millions of times is, beyond doubt, an arising that is a singular arising of the intention. And the

arising of the intention in millions of people is a singular arising of the intention. And a singular arising of the intention is millions of arisings of the intention. Training and enlightenment, as well as turning the Wheel of the Dharma, are also just like this. And it is like this because, if you were unaware of such things as grasses and trees, how could you possibly have a body and a mind? And if you had no body or mind, how could you possibly know of grasses and trees? And if you were unaware of grasses and trees, there would be no grasses and trees for you.[2] Practicing the Way by doing meditation is giving rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood. The arisings of the intention transcend sameness or difference. The instances of doing meditation transcend sameness or difference, and they transcend something occurring just two or three times, and they transcend being something to be rid of. You need to thoroughly explore each and every thing in this way. If the whole procedure, from beginning to end, of bringing together grasses and trees, as well as the seven treasures, in order to fashion stupas and Buddhist images were activities that involved attachments, then enlightenment would not be possible and the thirty-seven methods of training to realize enlightenment would also be activities that involve attachments.[3]

As to the matter of the body and mind of humans in the three temporal worlds—be they humble or lofty—if they were to undertake the training and practice whilst being all involved with attachments, it would not be possible for them to reach the Ultimate. Grasses and trees, tiles and stones, as well as the four elements* and the five skandhas,* are likewise 'just mind': they are likewise what the True Form of all things is. The whole universe in all ten quarters, as well as the True Nature of all things, which is Buddha Nature, are likewise manifestations of Truth. Within the True Nature of all things, which is Buddha Nature, how could there possibly be such things as grasses and trees? And how could such things as grasses and trees not be Buddha Nature, which is the True Nature of all things? All thoughts and things are not involved with attachments, nor are they free of attachments: they are the Real Form. The Real Form is the real form of all things just as they are, and being just as they are is synonymous with our body and mind at this very moment, here and now. By means of this body and mind of ours, we can give rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood. Therefore, do not despise treading on water or treading on rocks. While holding a single blade of grass aloft,

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2. 'Grasses and trees' is a Zen term for all manner of things that sprout up and flourish for a while.

3. These thirty-seven methods are the topic of Discourse 70: On the Thirty-seven Methods of Training for Realizing Enlightenment (*Sanjūshichihon Bodai Bumpō*).

we create a golden body sixteen feet high, and while holding aloft a single mote of dust, we construct a stupa for our dear Old Buddha. These activities are manifestations of our having given rise to the heart of Wisdom. It is our encountering Buddha, our heeding Buddha, our becoming Buddha, and our putting Buddha into practice.

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Shakyamuni Buddha once said:

> You lay men and lay women who are my virtuous sons and daughters, make alms offerings to the Three Treasures—Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—with the flesh of your spouses and children, and make alms offerings to the Three Treasures with your own flesh. How can all the monks who have already received the alms you've offered in good faith possibly fail to do their training?

So, be aware that making alms offerings to the Three Treasures of such things as food, clothing, bedding, medicine, lodging for monks, cultivated lands, and woodlands is your making alms offerings of your own flesh and skin, bones and marrow, as well as those of your spouse and children. Having already entered the Three Treasure's ocean of meritorious activity, you are therefore all of one and the same flavor. Because you are all of one and the same flavor, you <u>are</u> the Three Treasures. The meritorious activity of the Three Treasures has already manifested in the skin and flesh, bones and marrow of your own body, as well as that of your spouse and children, for it is your diligence in doing your utmost to practice the Way. Now, joining with the True Nature and form of the World-honored One, you should explore the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of the Buddha's Way. This present alms offering of your very being is your giving rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood, so how could those monks who received your offering possibly fail to do the practice, and do it correctly from start to finish? Accordingly, no sooner does a single particle of thought arise than your Whole Mind will in an instant follow suit and give rise to your intention. When your Whole Mind arises right off, Unbounded Space will soon emerge.

In short, even when saintly ones and arhats awaken to the Mind that gives rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood, they will be able, right off, to plant Buddha Nature's seed.[4] Should they then do the training and practice devotedly by embracing the four elements and the five skandhas, they will realize the Way, or

4. 'Saintly ones and arhats' refers to those doing their training within the Lesser Course. The terms do not imply that such persons are necessarily monastics.

should they then do the training and practice devotedly by embracing grasses and trees, fences and walls, they will realize the Way because, in both their substance and their inherent nature, the four elements and the five skandhas are the same as grasses and trees, tiles and stones, and because they are also the same in mind and in life, as well as in body and in function.

Accordingly, within the assemblies of the Buddhas and Ancestors there have been many who did their utmost to practice the Way by taking up the mind that focused on grasses and trees. This is behavior arising from the Mind that seeks enlightenment. As a person of the Way, the Fifth Ancestor, Daiman Kōnin, once planted a pine tree. Rinzai made the effort to plant cedar and pine trees on Mount Ōbaku. And there was the old man of the Ryū clan who planted pines on Mount Tōzan. By practicing the constancy of the pine and cypress, they scraped out the Eye of the Buddhas and Ancestors.[5] This displayed their ability to take pleasure in their living Eye, which is the Eye enlightened.

Fashioning such things as stupas and images of Buddhas is the Eye taking Its pleasure. It is to taste the arising of the intention to realize Buddhahood: it is to make use of the arising of this intention. If there were no attaining of the Eye for such things as fashioning stupas, there would be no awakening to the Truth by the Buddhas and Ancestors. After attaining an Eye for fashioning Buddhas, one creates Buddhas and creates Ancestors. Were someone to say, "Such fashioned things as stupas are ultimately reduced to dust and dirt, and so they have no real merit, whereas cultivating 'nothing arising' is stable practice because it is not tainted by the dust and dirt of the world," these would not be the words of a Buddha. If stupas are reduced to dust and dirt, then the state of 'non-arising' will also be reduced to dust and dirt. If the state of 'non-arising' is not reduced to dust and dirt, then stupas likewise will not be reduced to dust and dirt. Right here is where the What is! To give expression to having attachments is to give expression to being free of attachments.

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The Tathagata said in the *Avatamsaka Scripture*:

> When Bodhisattvas* give rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood and make birth-and-death the foremost issue, they

5. Because the pine and the cypress trees do not lose their foliage even in the severest of winters, they have been used in the East as a common metaphor for friends who remain constant in adversity. To 'scrape out' the Eye of the Buddhas and Ancestors means to fully absorb Their spiritual Teaching and to make It one's own.

> wholeheartedly seek enlightened Wisdom and, being steadfast, they will not waver. The meritorious functioning of that single-mindedness is deep and vast, knowing no bounds. If I were to analyze and explain it, I would be unable to exhaust the topic, even if I had eons to do it.

You need to be clear about this: using the issue of birth-and-death to give rise to your intention to realize Buddhahood is to wholeheartedly seek enlightened Wisdom. This wholeheartedness must be as a single blade of grass or a single tree, because it is your single moment of life and your single moment of death. Even so, the depth of this meritorious activity is beyond any bounds, and its vastness is also beyond any bounds. Even were the Tathagata to speak for eons of time describing this meritorious activity, He could not fully exhaust the topic even then. He could not fully exhaust it because one's Mind remains after one's death, just as the bottom of the sea remains after the sea has dried up. It is like seeking far and wide for the boundaries of this wholeheartedness, which is as boundless as the depth and vastness of a single blade of grass or a single tree, or of a stone or a tile. When the single blade of grass or the single stone is seven or eight feet tall, so such a one's wholeheartedness is likewise seven or eight feet tall, and his heart that seeks the Way is also seven or eight feet tall.

Thus, entering into the depths of the mountains to ponder the Buddha's Way may well be easy, whereas to fashion a stupa or fashion a Buddha is ever so hard. Though both approaches are ripened by diligence and strenuous effort, the one makes use of the mind and the other is being used by the Mind, which is different by far. Time after time, giving rise to the enlightened Mind in this way makes the Buddhas and Ancestors manifest.

Delivered to the assembly at Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province on the fourteenth day of the second lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (March 24, 1244).

Copied at Eihei-ji Temple on the tenth day of the third lunar month in the second year of the Kōan era (April 22, 1279).

Ejō

68

On the Universal Body of the Tathagata

(Nyorai Zenshin)

Translator's Introduction: This short discourse is based on passages from the *Lotus Scripture*. In it, Dōgen discusses the Buddha (the Awakened One) as the Tathagata (the One Who Comes Thus), that is, as someone who has completely dropped off self and now simply is, just as He is. The body of One who is a Tathagata is no longer a matter of something personal but embraces the whole universe and is, therefore, the Universal Body. This Universal Body incorporates all that the historical Buddha leaves behind, such as His relics. And His Universal Body includes not only these relics but also His teachings, particularly in the form of written, bound copies.

> Once when Shakyamuni Buddha was residing on Vulture Peak at Rajagriha, He addressed Lord Bhaisajya the Bodhisattva*-Mahasattva* of Healing, saying, "Lord Bhaisajya, in every place where this Teaching of Mine is voiced, or read, or recited aloud, or written down, or stored where bound copies of the Scriptures are kept, you should erect a seven-jeweled* stupa,* one that is especially tall, broad, and well adorned. There is no need to install a relic within it.[1] And why? Because the Universal Body of the Tathagata already exists within this stupa. This stupa should be presented with alms, revered, highly honored, and eulogized by your offering all kinds of flowers and incense, jeweled garlands and silken canopies, banners and flags, music and songs of praise. If there are people who are able to catch sight of this stupa and thereupon bow in respect and offer alms, by all means you should realize that they are approaching supreme, fully perfected enlightenment."

What He called 'bound copies of Scriptures' are like what has been voiced, what has been read, what has been recited, and what has been written down. Bound copies of Scripture are what True Nature is. The True Nature of the seven-jeweled

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* See *Glossary*.

1. A relic (J. *shāri*; Skt. *śarīra*) customarily consisted of some physical part of a deceased Buddha or Ancestor, such as ashes, bones, or hair.

stupa that needs to be erected is called the Stupa. As to the ultimate measure of Its height and breadth, that measure is, of necessity, the measure of True Nature. The Universal Body of the Tathagata that already exists within this Stupa refers to the bound Scriptures, which is synonymous with the Universal Body.

Accordingly, Teachings that have been voiced, read, recited, and written down are what the Universal Body of the Tathagata is. This is why we should make offerings to, revere, highly honor, and eulogize It by presenting It with all kinds of flowers and incense, jeweled garlands and silken canopies, banners and flags, music and songs of praise. Offerings may be such things as celestial flowers, celestial incense, and celestial canopies because these are all True Nature. Or they may be the choicest of flowers and incense, or kesas* and robes esteemed among ordinary people for these are all True Nature. Offerings of alms and offerings of reverence are what True Nature is.

You should erect a Stupa, reminding yourself that there is no need to install a relic within It, for you know that bound Scriptures are the relics of the Tathagata and are part of the Universal Body of the Tathagata. Beyond doubt, these Scriptures are golden words that came from the Buddha's mouth, and there can be no spiritually beneficial endeavor that surpasses seeing and hearing them. Be quick to accumulate merit and pile up virtuous acts. If there are people who bow in reverence to this Stupa and make an offering to It, keep in mind that they are all approaching supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. When we catch sight of this Stupa, we should, in all sincerity, respectfully bow and make an offering to It. Then we will all be close to supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. 'Being close' does not mean 'being close after being separate from', nor does it mean 'being close after coming together'; 'being close' refers to one's enlightenment being supreme and fully perfected. When we experience, here and now, the receiving and passing on, reading and reciting, understanding and expressing, writing and copying of Scriptures, it is our catching sight of this Stupa. We should rejoice, for we are all close to supreme, fully perfected enlightenment.

Well now, the bound copies of the Scriptures are the Universal Body of the Tathagata. Bowing in respect to copies of Scripture is bowing in respect to the Tathagata. To have encountered copies of Scripture is to have an audience with the Tathagata, for copies of Scripture are relics of the Tathagata and relics of the Tathagata are these Scriptures. Even if you have learned that copies of Scriptures are relics, if you do not know that relics refers to copies of Scriptures, then you have not yet arrived at what the Buddha was saying. The True Nature of all things here and now is what copies of Scripture are. The world of humans as well as celestial worlds, the oceans as well as empty space, this planet of ours as well as

other worlds are all True Nature; they are all copies of Scriptures; they are all relics. Receiving and passing on, reading and reciting, understanding and expressing, writing and copying Scriptures creates relics and will open the way to enlightenment. This is what is meant by the phrase, 'following the Scriptures'. There are the relics of former Buddhas, and the relics of present-day Buddhas, and the relics of pratyekabuddhas,* and the relics of Wheel-turning Lords,* and the relics of those who are veritable lions among men, as well as the relics of wooden Buddhas, and the relics of painted Buddhas, and the relics of human beings. Buddhas and Ancestors during the present-day generations in Great Sung China are letting Their relics show while They are still alive, and many are producing relics with Their cremation: these are all copies of Scripture.

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Once, when addressing a large assembly, Shakyamuni Buddha said, "The lifetime to which I succeeded by traveling the Bodhisattva Way has not even yet been exhausted, but will still be twice the past number of eons." Our present eighty-four gallons of relics are, frankly, what the life of a Buddha is.[2] A lifetime of practicing the Bodhisattva Way is, from the start, not limited merely to the three-thousand great-thousandfold world; it can be something beyond calculation, as is the Universal Body of the Tathagata, and as are the bound copies of Scripture.

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The Bodhisattva Who Accumulates Wisdom said:

> I have seen Shakyamuni the Tathagata pursue the Bodhisattva Way without ever ceasing, doing difficult and painful practices for incalculable eons, and thereby accumulating merit and piling up virtue. When I have looked at the three-thousand great-thousandfold world, there is no place even the size of a mustard seed where, as a Bodhisattva, He has not laid down his life for the sake of others. And because of that He was able to fully experience the path to enlightenment.

Be clear about this, this three-thousand great-thousandfold world is a single instance of a sincere and trusting heart, and it is a single instance of emptiness of self, and it is the Universal Body of the Tathagata, which does not depend on our

2. 'Eighty-four gallons of relics' is an estimate of the average size of a human body.

laying down our life or on our not laying it down. Relics are beyond being something prior to a Buddha or after a Buddha, and they are not something that lines up beside a Buddha. Performing difficult and painful practices for immeasurable eons has been the daily activity of the Buddha's womb and the Buddha's hara;[3] these practices are the Buddha's Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow. As has been said of Him, "He has never ceased to be." Even after becoming an Awakened One, He practiced ever more vigorously, and even though He has transformed our great-thousandfold world, He still goes forward. The everyday life of His Universal Body is no different.

Given to the assembly at Kippō-ji Temple in the Yoshida district of Echizen Province on the fifteenth day of the second lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (March 25, 1244).

Copied while in the monks' quarters at Eihei Zen Temple on the twenty-third day of the sixth lunar month in the second year of the Kōan era (August 2, 1279).

3. The Buddha's womb is the source from which all things are produced by one's Buddha Nature. The Buddha's hara is the place from which the Child of the Lord is born.

69

On the Meditative State That Is the Lord of Meditative States

(Zammai-ō Zammai)

Translator's Introduction: A meditative state is a state of the mind in meditation. In this discourse, Dōgen explores the ultimate form of these meditative states, one that arises when one understands seated meditation as more than what the mind or body experiences during formal seated meditation.

Throughout this discourse he uses the term *kekkafuza*, which is traditionally rendered as 'to sit in full lotus position', but such a translation is apt to be understood only on a literal, physical level. By contrast, when one's legs are folded into the lotus position, they indeed form a lotus, as the term implies. Hence one is, in effect, doing one's meditation while seated on a lotus. Iconographically, this is a traditional sitting place for Buddhas, and it is, more specifically, the meditation seat of Vairochana, the Cosmic Buddha, whom Scriptures describe as appearing atop Shakyamuni Buddha's head when He is doing seated meditation. Thus, to sit in meditation like Vairochana is to sit upon a lotus throne. This is true regardless of the physical posture of the body. To point to this non-physical aspect, the phrase *kekkafuza* is rendered in the present translation as 'to sit as if sitting within a lotus blossom'.

Further, as Dōgen has pointed out already on a number of occasions, 'doing seated meditation' has a broader meaning than just doing formal meditation sittings. It also refers to maintaining the mind of meditation in whatever one does. Dōgen expresses this broader meaning in the course of this discourse.

Going beyond the whole universe at full speed and then living a valued and greatly honored life within the dwelling place of the Buddhas and Ancestors is what sitting as if sitting within a lotus blossom is all about. Leaping over the heads of non-Buddhists and gangs of bedevilers and then, within the inner chambers of the Buddhas and Ancestors, becoming someone who has realized the intent of the Buddha Dharma is what sitting as if sitting within a lotus blossom is all about. In order to go beyond the outermost limits, which is where the Buddhas and Ancestors are found, there is just this one method. Therefore, the Buddhas and Ancestors have engaged in this method without having any other practice.

By all means keep in mind that the universe of seated meditation is something a long way off from other universes. Having clarified this principle, the Buddhas and Ancestors have undertaken to do Their utmost to give rise to the intention to awaken, to do the training and practice, and to realize spiritual Wisdom

and the freedom of nirvana. At the very moment of sitting, you should thoroughly explore through your training whether the whole universe is that which is vertical or that which is horizontal.[1] At the very moment of sitting, just what is that 'sitting'? Is it our mind doing somersaults? Or is it like a fish freely disporting in water? Or is it thinking about something? Or is it striving after something? Or not striving after anything? No, it is sitting within sitting, sitting within body and mind, dropping everything off within sitting and within body and mind, and just sitting! In this way, you need to thoroughly explore through your training the thousands of aspects, nay, the hundreds of thousands of aspects of just sitting. Your body should just sit as if you were sitting within a lotus blossom.

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My late Master, an Old Buddha, once said:

> Doing the practice of meditation is the dropping off of body and mind. To accomplish this, right off, is the purpose of seated meditation practice. "Just control yourself and sit there!"[2] You don't have to offer incense, do prostrations, chant the name of Buddha, repent of anything, or read Scriptures.

It is clear that over the past four or five hundred years, only my late Master has scraped out the Eye of the Buddhas and Ancestors and just sat within this Eye. There have been few in China who stood head-and-shoulders with him. Few have clarified that 'just sitting there' was the method of the Buddha, whereas the Buddha Dharma is "Just sit there!" Even if some appear to understand physical sitting to be what the Buddha taught, they have not yet grasped that 'sitting there' means "Just sit there!"[3] Much less can they keep to and preserve the Buddha Dharma as the Buddha's Teaching!

Hence, there is the mind's just sitting there, which is not the same as the body's just sitting there. And there is the body's just sitting there, which is not the

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1. 'Vertical' refers to space, which at any given moment contains everything without anything being added or taken away, whereas 'horizontal' refers to time, which is the ever-changing flow of moments of now, wherein all is in constant flux. These two perspectives are explored in depth by Dōgen in Discourse 11: On 'Just for the Time Being, Just for a While, For the Whole of Time is the Whole of Existence' (*Uji*), which literally translates as 'Existence and Time'.

2. This is a translation of the oft-used Japanese term *shikan taza*.

3. That is, neither trying to think nor trying not to think.

same as the mind's just sitting. There is 'just sitting there with body and mind having dropped off', which is not the same as 'just sitting in order to drop off body and mind'. To have already realized such a state is the perfect oneness of practice and understanding that the Buddhas and Ancestors have experienced. Maintain and safeguard your mind's functions of remembering, considering, and reflecting. Thoroughly explore through your training what mind, intent, and consciousness truly are.

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Shakyamuni Buddha, in addressing His great assembly, once said:

> If you sit as if sitting within a lotus blossom, you will experience a meditative state within your body and mind which will have such dignity and virtue that people will respect and venerate it. This meditative state will be like a sun illumining the whole world. It will eradicate sleepiness, laziness, and brooding from the mind. The body will become light, without creating a feeling of fatigue. And whatever arises as enlightenment will also be light and accommodating. Your sitting peacefully will be like a dragon's coiling up. Just seeing a picture of someone seated within a lotus blossom is enough to frighten the Lord of Demons, and how much more so, should he actually see someone who is experiencing the Truth whilst sitting peacefully without any agitation?

So, even the Lord of Demons is startled, troubled, and frightened when he encounters an illustration of someone seated within a lotus blossom.[4] How much more so were you to actually sit as if sitting within a lotus blossom, for the spiritual benefits from doing this cannot be measured. The joy and virtue of just sitting there on an everyday basis is beyond measure.

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Shakyamuni Buddha, in addressing His great assembly, continued, saying, "This is why we sit as if sitting within a lotus blossom." The World-honored Tathagata then taught each of His disciples how they should sit in this way. Some non-Buddhists always stand on their tiptoes when seeking the Way, some always stand upright when seeking the Way, and some hike their feet up on their shoulders

4. The Lord of Demons is often referred to as Māra and is the personification of the selfish self.

when seeking the Way. Confused and rigid minds like these sink into a sea of hindrances, their bodies knowing no tranquility. This is why the Buddha taught His disciples to sit as if sitting within a lotus blossom with their body upright. And why? Because when the body is upright, the mind is easy to set properly. When the body sits upright, the mind does not tire. Once the mind is regulated and its intent is proper, the mind is held to what is right before it. If the mind starts galloping off or becomes scattered, or if the body starts leaning or shifting about, sitting upright will remove these effects and bring you back. When you want to realize a meditative state and desire to enter into a meditative state, even if you are galloping off in all directions or are wildly scattered, sitting upright will bring all these completely back to normal. Doing the practice in this way lets you awaken to and enter the meditative state that is the lord of meditative states.

Be clear about this, sitting as if sitting within a lotus blossom is what the meditative state that is the lord of meditative states is; it is what entering into spiritual realization is. All meditative states are members of the family of the meditative state that is the lord. Sitting as if sitting within a lotus blossom means keeping your body upright, and keeping your mind upright, and keeping your body-and-mind upright, and keeping the Buddhas and Ancestors upright, and keeping your training and enlightenment upright, and keeping the crown of your head upright, and keeping the very pulse of your lifeblood upright.

Now, by forming a lotus with our human skin, flesh, bones, and marrow, we form a lotus within the meditative state that is the lord of meditative states. The World-honored One constantly maintained, and entrusted to us, the practice of sitting as if sitting within a lotus blossom, and Transmitted this 'sitting as if sitting within a lotus blossom' to His disciples, and had the practice of sitting as if sitting within a lotus blossom taught to ordinary people and to those in lofty positions. This is precisely what the Mind seal* that the Seven Buddhas* accurately Transmitted is.

Shakyamuni Buddha sat Himself under the Bodhi tree as if He were sitting within a lotus blossom as He let pass fifty small eons, then sixty eons, then immeasurable eons. Whether you sit as if sitting within a lotus blossom for three weeks or for a few hours, it is your turning of the wondrous Wheel of the Dharma and your lifelong edification of the Buddha. Further, when you do not flag or slacken, this will be your 'yellowed scrolls with their red scroll rods'.[5] This is the

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* See *Glossary*.

5. 'Yellowed scrolls with their red scroll rods' is a Buddhist reference to the Scriptures. It describes the form in which Scriptures were originally preserved.

occasion of Buddha meeting Buddha. This is the very moment when sentient beings become Buddhas.

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After his arrival from the West, our First Chinese Ancestor, the Venerable Bodhidharma, sat as if he were sitting within a lotus blossom while facing a wall at Shōrin-ji Temple on a peak in the Sū mountain range for nine autumns. From that time up to this very day, the Eye atop the crown of his head has spread throughout the whole of China. The lifeblood of our First Ancestor is, simply, being seated as if sitting within a lotus blossom. Before our First Ancestor arrived in China, the people there had not yet heard of sitting as if sitting within a lotus blossom. They only learned about it after our First Ancestor came from the West.

As this is so, just control yourself and sit day and night as if you were sitting within a lotus blossom, for the whole of your life and for myriad lives to come, without leaving your monastery and without doing any other practice, for this is what the meditative state that is the lord of meditative states is.

Delivered to the assembly at the Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province on the fifteenth day of the second lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (March 25, 1244).

Written down in the quarters of the Abbot's assistant on the same mountain on the same night.

Ejō

Compared against the original and corrected on the first day of autumn in the first year of the Bun'ō era (August 9, 1260).

70

On the Thirty-Seven Methods of Training for Realizing Enlightenment

(Sanjūshichihon Bodai Bumpō)

Translator's Introduction: These thirty-seven methods derive from early Buddhist scriptures. Although they have customarily been taken in a literal sense, Dōgen chooses to explore deeper spiritual implications of these Teachings.

Of particular notice in this discourse is Dōgen's discussion of the Noble Eightfold Path, in which he has added a lengthy and spirited commentary on Right Action. There are some who may be disturbed by the strong rhetoric that Dōgen uses in this section. There are times when a Zen Master uses strong language, as it may be the only way for a Master to help cut through their disciples' delusions so that they may reconsider what they are doing. Also, many of Dōgen's expressions would not have seemed as highly charged in his time and culture as they seem in today's Western culture. This section focuses on the relationship between those who are lay trainees and those who are monastics. Dōgen's target in this section is quite clear: that flattering and manipulating bunch who curry worldly favors, seeking to be labeled as a Zen Master by some sovereign or minister of state, simply because they go around spouting that there is really no difference between what is going on in the mind of someone involved in affairs of state and what is going on in the mind of a Shakyamuni Buddha. He then endeavors to point out what the difference is between those who have chosen to remain in home life (J. *zaike*) and those who have chosen to leave home life behind (J. *shukke*): even the best of lay trainees cannot realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment (Buddhahood) unless they ultimately leave home life behind because the pull of secular demands is too great and time-consuming, and anything less than a full commitment will simply not be sufficient. He then takes up the cases of various lay people, specifically including Vimalakirti (J. *Yuima*) who had long served as a Zen Buddhist model for lay trainees, whom 'that bunch' claim had realized full Buddhahood without having to leave lay life behind. However, despite what may seem on first reading to be Dōgen's dismissal of lay trainees, with a closer reading it appears that what he is really attacking is the notion that, since there is no difference between the mind of a lay person and that of a monk, monastic life is irrelevant to the realization of Buddhahood and that, since lay people are enlightened just as they are, they therefore need not train. When this section of Dōgen's discourse is seen in relation to what he has been teaching so far, the relevance of his message for lay trainees might be summed up as, "Do not give up on your training, for training and enlightenment are synonymous, and do not do the practice in order to become a Buddha, but simply do it to fulfill your Bodhisattva vow to help all sentient beings, including yourself, realize their True Nature."

The Buddhas of old had a system of study, namely, the learning, practicing, and confirming of thirty-seven methods of training for realizing enlightenment.

These methods deal with the variations and stages in training and are also the methods used for grappling with one's spiritual question. They are the means for producing all the Buddhas and Ancestors.

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The Four Abodes of Reflection
also called the Four Focal Points of Reflection

First, reflecting on the impurity of body
Second, reflecting on how what our senses perceive leads to suffering
Third, reflecting on the impermanence of our mental functions
Fourth, reflecting on how all thoughts and things are devoid of a permanent, unchanging self

'Reflecting on the impurity of body' means reflecting on our present fleshly body as being the Whole Universe in all ten quarters, because that is what our true Body is. The reflection that our body is impure is what springs up again and again when we are on the Absolute Way. Were it not to spring up, reflection upon it would not be possible. It would be as if we lacked a body. It would be as if doing the practice were impossible. It would be as if giving full expression to It were impossible. It would be as if fully reflecting on anything were impossible. But since you have already had manifestations of the possibility of reflection, you should recognize that it can spring up again and again. 'The possibility of reflection' refers to our everyday actions, such as sweeping the ground and sweeping the floor. Because we sweep the ground in any given month, and because we sweep the ground and sweep the floor punctually during the second lunar month, the whole of the great earth is just as it is.[1]

The body's reflecting refers to your reflecting on your own body. It is not using the body to reflect on anything else. And this very act of reflection means that That Which Is Superlative has appeared. When your reflecting on your body has appeared, your reflecting on your Mind may be searched for but you have not yet made contact with It, for It has not yet appeared. Thus, when you reflect on

1. That is, we do our daily actions, whether we are aware of what time it is or not. In the Japanese calendar, the second lunar month coincides with the beginning of spring.

your body, it is the manifesting of the Diamond Samadhi and the Bravely Going On Samadhi, and these are both reflections on the body's not being pure.[2]

Speaking more generally, we call the principle of seeing the morning star in the middle of the night as seeing that the body is not pure. It has nothing to do with the issue of being clean versus being unclean. When there is a body, it is not pure; when bodily excretions manifest, they are not pure. To explore the Matter* in this way, when demons become Buddhas, they use their demon to defeat their demon in order to become a Buddha.[3] When Buddhas become Buddhas, They take up Their Buddha Nature to fathom Their Buddha Nature and become a Buddha. When ordinary humans become Buddhas, they take up their humanity to harmonize their humanity and become a Buddha. By all means, you should thoroughly explore the principle that there is a pathway to be taken up.

For instance, it is like the method of washing clothes. The water is dirtied by the clothes, whereas the clothes are washed clean. Whether we use this soiled water to do our laundry or change this water to continue washing, we are still using water and still washing our clothes. If the clothes do not appear to be clean after one or two washings, do not stop from weariness and let the laundry pile up. If your water has been all absorbed, get more water; even if your robe appears clean, give it another rinse. When it comes to water, we use various sorts of liquids which are fine for washing robes. Thoroughly explore the principle that we know that water is unclean when there are fish in it. When it comes to robes, there are various types to be washed. Making such an effort out of washing your clothes is the arising of your kōan.* However, one will get a glimpse of what cleanliness is. The underlying point here is that soaking your clothes in water is not necessarily your original goal nor is dirtying the water with your clothes your original goal. It is in washing your clothes by using the dirtied water that the original goal of washing your clothes exists. Further, there are methods of washing clothes clean by using such things as fire, wind, soil, water, or air. And there are methods of cleansing earth, water, fire, wind, and air by using earth, water, fire, wind, or air.

The main point of the present 'seeing that the body is not pure' is also like this. Accordingly, what 'body' encompasses, what 'seeing' encompasses, and what 'not pure' encompasses comprise the kesa* that your mother gave birth to. If a kesa

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2. The Diamond Samadhi is the meditative state that is like the one described in the *Diamond-cutting Scripture*, whereas the Bravely Going On Samadhi is that meditative state described in the *Scripture of Bravely Going On* (J. *Shuryōgon Kyō;* S. *Shurangama Scripture*).

* See *Glossary.*

3. In Buddhism, the term 'demon' is often used to refer to defiling passions.

is not the kesa that your mother gave birth to, then the Buddhas and Ancestors do not use it—how could Shōnawashu have been the only one?[4] You should hold this principle in mind very carefully, exploring it through your training and dealing with it exhaustively.

'Reflecting on how what our senses perceive leads to suffering' means that suffering is nothing other than a sense perception. It is beyond a matter of what we perceive or what others perceive, and it is beyond a matter of being attached to one's own perceptions or not being attached to them. It is the sensations of a live body, and it is the sufferings of a live body. Say we replace a sweet, ripe melon with a bitter bottle-gourd. It is bitter, skin and flesh, bones and marrow. It is bitter to the mind of attachment and to the mind free of attachments. This type of reflecting is one step above spiritual abilities and above training to realize enlightenment. It is a spiritual ability that springs forth from the whole stem, that springs forth from the whole root. Thus, it has been said, "Sentient beings are thought to suffer, and here indeed is a sentient being who suffers." 'Sentient beings' is beyond self and beyond other. We cannot deceive others, for ultimately there are sentient beings who are suffering. Sweet melons are sweet up to their calyx, whereas bitter gourds are bitter down to their very roots. Even so, what suffering is cannot easily be ferreted out. Ask yourself: precisely what <u>is</u> suffering?

Concerning 'reflecting on the impermanence of our mental functions', the Old Buddha Daikan Enō once said, "Impermanence is what Buddha Nature is." Thus, the various ways in which impermanence is understood are all Buddha Nature. Great Master Yōka Genkaku once said, "That actions are impermanent and that all things are empty of anything unchanging is what the Tathagata's great, fully perfected realization was." Your present day reflecting on the impermanence of your mental functions is itself the Tathagata's great, fully perfected realization, for the great, fully perfected realization is what a Tathagata is. Even if your mind does not intend to reflect, it pursues whatever is going by. Thus, wherever there is mind, there is reflection. To generalize, upon your reaching Supreme Wisdom, that supreme, fully enlightened state manifests simply as impermanence and the reflecting mind. The mind is not necessarily constant. Because it goes beyond the four lines of a Scriptural verse and transcends the hundreds of ways of negating, the tiles* and stones of our walls and fences along with their rocks of various sizes is our mind itself, and impermanence itself is reflection itself.

'Reflecting on how all thoughts and things are devoid of a permanent, unchanging self' means that whatever is long is the long Dharma body and

4. The Third Indian Ancestor, Shōnawashu, is said to have been born wearing the kesa.

whatever is short is the short Dharma body. Because they appear in a living manner, they are without an unchanging self. Buddha Nature does not exist for a dog, and a dog has Buddha Nature. All sentient beings lack having a Buddha Nature, and Buddha Nature is beyond all sentient beings. All Buddhas are beyond ordinary sentient beings, and all Buddhas are beyond 'Buddhas'. All Buddha Nature is beyond 'Buddha Nature', and all sentient beings are beyond being 'a sentient being'. Because this is the way things are, all thoughts and things are beyond being 'all thoughts and things', which we explore through our training as our reflecting on how all thoughts and things are devoid of a permanent, unchanging self. You need to remember to let your whole being leap free from entanglements with self.

Shakyamuni Buddha once said, "All Buddhas and bodhisattvas* reside peacefully within this Teaching, which They regard as a sacred womb." Both Buddhas and bodhisattvas treat these four abodes of reflection as a sacred womb. You need to know that there is the sacred womb of those who have reached the stage of All-knowing Enlightenment and there is the sacred womb of those who have reached the stage of Wondrous Enlightenment.[5] There are Buddhas and bodhisattvas who have already reached these stages, and there are Buddhas who have gone beyond Wondrous Enlightenment who likewise regard this as a sacred womb. And bodhisattvas who have leapt beyond the stages prior to All-knowing Enlightenment and Wondrous Enlightenment also regard the four abodes of reflection as a sacred womb. Truly, the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors are nothing other than the four abodes of reflection.

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The Four Kinds of Cutting Off Evil
also called the Four Kinds of Right Effort

First, endeavoring to avoid whatever gives rise to evil deeds
Second, endeavoring to bring one's evil deeds to a halt when they arise
Third, endeavoring to do what produces merit
Fourth, endeavoring to do what increases merit

5. 'All-knowing Enlightenment' is the fifty-first stage of bodhisattvahood, the one before becoming a Buddha. 'Wondrous Enlightenment' is the fifty-second stage of bodhisattvahood, the one of becoming Buddha.

In ‘endeavoring to avoid whatever gives rise to evil deeds’, what we call ‘evil deeds’ do not invariably have set forms or exact definitions. They simply follow the customs of a country or are those established in a given land. Even so, preventing the arising of evil deeds that have not yet arisen is what the Buddha taught. It is what has been continually Transmitted accurately. It has been said that, according to the understanding of non-Buddhists, the self that has not yet sprouted up is taken to be what is fundamental.[6] According to the Buddha’s Teaching, it will not be like this.

Let’s look into this matter a bit. In the time before evil deeds have arisen, where are they? Were you to say that they exist in the future, you would be on the false path of the nihilists forever.[7] Were you to say that the future becomes the present, that would not be the way that the Buddha’s Teaching put the matter, for you would have confused what the three temporal worlds are. If you are unclear about the three temporal worlds, you will become confused as to what thoughts and things are. If you are confused about what thoughts and things are, you will become confused as to what the true appearance of thoughts and things are. If you are confused about their true appearance, you will be confused about what the saying ‘each Buddha on His own, together with all Buddhas’ is pointing to. Therefore, we do not say that the future later becomes the present.

Let’s look a bit further. What should we call evil deeds that have not yet arisen? Who has known or seen them? If they were knowable and perceivable, there would be a time when they had not yet existed and a time when their not yet having arisen had not occurred. If this were so, we could not then call them ‘thoughts and things that have not yet arisen’. We would have to call them ‘thoughts and things that have already passed away’. You should set aside learning from non-Buddhists or such persons as shravakas* who follow the Lesser Course,* and just focus your practice on endeavoring to avoid whatever gives rise to evil deeds. We call the unrestrained accumulating of evil thoughts ‘evil deeds that have not yet arisen’, for that is what they are. What we call ‘their non-arising’ means ‘yesterday expressing the Dharma of Certainty and today expressing the Dharma of Uncertainty’.

What ‘endeavoring to bring one’s evil deeds to a halt when they arise’ refers to is what has already arisen being what has completely arisen, and what has completely arisen being what has half arisen, and what has half arisen being what

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6. That is, the non-Buddhist view that there is a permanent, unchanging soul which exists prior to, and independent of, birth, the body being but a temporary abode for this soul.

7. That is, one would be denying the Buddhist principle of causality.

is arising here and now. What is arising here and now is a hindrance that conceals what is arising. It is an arising that springs forth from our mind. When we make this effort, we bring our evil deeds to a halt. It is like Devadatta, while alive, entering the realm of the hells and it is like Devadatta, while alive, receiving the promise of Buddhahood.[8] It is like the living body of Shakrendra being within the womb of a donkey, and it is like his living body realizing Buddhahood.[9] Making use of such an underlying principle, you need to explore through your training the principle of bringing about extinction of evil deeds. Extinguishing such deeds treats extinction as a leaping free and puts aside the delusion of extinguishing them.[10]

'Endeavoring to do what produces merit' is synonymous with the saying, "Being thoroughly content with one's countenance, just as we were before the duality of 'father' and 'mother' had arisen."[11] It is the time before thoughts and things have sprouted up. It is the understanding that precedes the Lords of Awe-inspiring Voices.

You need to understand that 'endeavoring to do what increases merit' is not the same as continuing to give rise to good that has already arisen. It is endeavoring to increase it. It is Shakyamuni Buddha Himself, once having seen the morning star, going on to help others see the morning star. It is one's Eye creating the morning star. It is, as Baso once put it, "After an aimless life, for thirty years I have gone on, never lacking for salt or vinegar." Because Shakyamuni was increasing merit, merit had already arisen. Thus, when the valley stream is deep, the handle of our dipper will be long. It is only because we already had It that Bodhidharma came.

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8. Due to his betrayal of Shakyamuni, Devadatta experienced hellish suffering during his lifetime, and, at the same time, Shakyamuni predicted Devadatta's ultimately realizing Buddhahood.

9. In Discourse 87: On Taking Refuge in the Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha *(Kie Buppōsō Hō),* Dōgen will relate the story of the deity Shakrendra, who was reborn in the womb of a donkey.

10. The delusional aspect arises from thinking that once one has brought one's wicked ways to a halt, one has brought them to an end for all times.

11. 'Being thoroughly content with one's countenance' refers to our complete acceptance of ourselves as being just what we are, without engaging in judgmentalism.

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The Four Steps Towards the Marvelous Spiritual Abilities

First, longing to help others realize their marvelous spiritual abilities
Second, having a mind to make the necessary effort
Third, being willing to keep one's focus on this goal
Fourth, doing all these through the mind of meditation

'Longing to help others realize their marvelous spiritual abilities' refers to the body and mind aiming to become a Buddha, to Baso's saying, "Having finished eating rice, I feel content, and look to taking me a nap," and to my Master Tendō's saying, "That is why I bow to you." In short, longing to help others realize their spiritual abilities goes beyond the causes and conditions of our body and mind. As Master Wanshi put it:

The water is now so clear you can see to its depths,
As fish swim by at their leisure:
The sky is now so clear it is boundless,
As birds fly off, leaving no trace.

'Having a mind to make the necessary effort' refers to the tiles and stones of our walls and fences, to the great earth with its mountains and rivers. It refers to the various arisings of the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form, as well as to the brightly polished wood of chairs and bamboo.[12] Because this mind is able to make the necessary effort, there is the mind of Buddhas and Ancestors, there is the mind of the worldly and the saintly, there is the mind of grasses and trees, there is the kaleidoscopic mind. Your whole mind is synonymous with having a mind to make the necessary effort.

'Being willing to keep one's focus on this goal' is synonymous with being atop a hundred-foot pole and then stepping straight ahead. Where is the top of this hundred-foot pole? As is said, we cannot find it without stepping straight ahead, and taking one step straight ahead is not something to be denied. This place is where the What exists, whether you explain it as advancing or as retreating. At the very moment when one is advancing towards spiritual abilities, the whole universe in all ten quarters follows upon these spiritual abilities and goes with them, and, following upon these spiritual abilities, we arrive.

12. That is, the mind that is required to help is just one's own ordinary mind, and does not require a mind that is somehow special or unique.

'Our doing all these through the mind of meditation' means that, due to the vastness of inherent karmic* ignorance, even all the Buddhas and Ancestors possess nothing upon which They can rely. There is meditating on our physical being, and there is meditating on our mind, and there is meditating on consciousness, and there is meditating on straw sandals, and there is meditating on one's self as it was before there was the Kalpa* of Emptiness.

We also call these methods the four abilities of free will. As Shakyamuni Buddha once said, "When someone has not moved, yet arrives, we call that the miraculous spiritual functioning of free will." Thus, what is sharp is like the point of a needle and what has a square edge is like the side of a chisel.

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The Five Roots of Training

First, the root of faith in the Dharma
Second, the root of zealous spiritual endeavor
Third, the root of mindfulness
Fourth, the root of concentration
Fifth, the root of wise discernment

Keep in mind that the root of faith in the Dharma is beyond self, beyond other, beyond any forcing of oneself, beyond anything contrived, beyond anything others have hauled up in their minds, beyond any objective rules or standards, and therefore it was Transmitted, unseen, from West to East. What we call 'faith' is a faith that is forged with one's whole being. It is invariably following where faith goes from the perspective of Buddhahood, which is following our Self where It goes. Were it not based upon the perspective of Buddhahood, there would be no manifestation of faith. This is why it is said that we can enter the great ocean of Buddha Dharma by means of our faith. In sum, the place where faith manifests is the place where Buddhas and Ancestors appear.

'The root of zealous spiritual endeavor' is being alert to just doing meditation. It is resting even when unable to take rest. It is taking rest when taking rest. It is being someone who is terribly unimportant. It is being One who is not unimportant. It is being both important and unimportant. It is the First Moon and the second moon.[13] Shakyamuni Buddha once said, "I am always zealous in my spiritual endeavors. That is why I was able to realize supreme, fully perfected

13. The First Moon is Buddha Nature, whereas the second moon is the reflection of Buddha Nature in all things.

enlightenment." What He called His continual zealous endeavors was His doing it totally—from head to tail—through the whole of past, present, and future. His saying, "I am always zealous in my spiritual endeavors" is His way of saying, "I have already realized Buddhahood." Because it is His already having realized supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, it is His always being zealous in His spiritual endeavors. Were this not so, how could He have possibly been continually zealous in His endeavors? How could He have possibly already realized It? How can those who are academic teachers of Buddhism and those who write scholarly commentaries on Scriptures possibly encounter or hear about this principle, much less explore it through training with a Master?

'The root of mindfulness' is the circle of those withered trees of living flesh, for what we call the circle of those of living flesh are as withered trees.[14] Withered trees <u>are</u> the root of mindfulness. When we ourselves are groping about trying to hit the mark, this is mindfulness. There is the mindfulness when we have a body, as well as the mindfulness when our mind is free of attachments. There is the mindfulness of an involved mind, and there is the mindfulness when we go beyond body. The root of life of all humans on this great earth is the root of mindfulness, and the root of life of all the Buddhas in the ten quarters is the root of mindfulness. There are many people in one moment of mindfulness and there are many moments of mindfulness within one person. Even so, there are those who have mindfulness and those who lack mindfulness. It is not a matter of human beings always having mindfulness, nor is it a matter of mindfulness always being associated with human beings. Even though this is so, there is inexhaustible merit in being able to observe and thoroughly investigate this topic of mindfulness.

'The root of concentration' is being sparing with your eyebrow, and it is your lifting up your eyebrow.[15] Hence, you are not in the dark about cause and effect, and you are not free from causality, whereby one may enter into the womb of a donkey or enter the womb of a horse. You are like a jewel encased within a stone: one cannot say that it is all stone or all jewel. You are like a mountain crowning the ground: one cannot say that it is all ground or all mountain. Even so, you spring forth from the crown of your head and leap into It.

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14. 'The circle of those withered trees of living flesh' refers to the Sangha sitting together in meditation: they are alive, yet they are sitting as still and unaffected by what comes as a withered tree.

15. A reference to the Venerable Pindola's raising of one eyebrow which Dōgen recounts in Discourse 57: On the Plum Blossom *(Baika)*. The raising of one's eyebrow was a sign of confirming someone else's kenshō, a practice which, according to Dōgen, should be done sparingly.

'The root of wise discernment' is the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds not knowing They have It, and it is feral cats and white water buffaloes being certain that they do have It.[16] You should not ask why it is thus, for it is beyond putting in words. There is inhalation and exhalation through the Nose, and there are fingertips within a Fist. The term 'donkey' maintains, and relies on, there being a donkey. The term 'well' is a mutual encountering with a well. In sum, a Root is the Dharma heir of a Root.

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The Five Strengths

First, the strength of faith in the Dharma
Second, the strength of zealous spiritual endeavor
Third, the strength of mindfulness
Fourth, the strength of concentration
Fifth, the strength of wise discernment

'The strength of faith' is being deceived by oneself and having no place to escape to. It is being called to by someone and having to turn one's head around. From birth to old age, it is simply being just This. It is stumbling seven times, then getting up and going on. It is eight times falling down and making use of it. Thus, faith is like a jewel, crystal clear as water. It is considering the Transmitting of the Dharma and the Transmitting of the robe to be acts of faith, as are the Transmitting of Buddhas and the Transmitting of Ancestors.

'The strength of zealous spiritual endeavor' is thoroughly expressing in words what cannot be put into practice and thoroughly putting into practice what cannot be put into words. Thus, being able to explain a little bit is nothing more than being able to explain a little bit. And being able to put into practice one line of Scripture is nothing more than being able to put into practice one line of Scripture. Getting strength from within one's strength is the strength of zealous spiritual endeavor.

'The strength of mindfulness' is the great slayer pulling someone by the nose. Thus, it was the Nose pulling the person.[17] The strength of mindfulness is also our relinquishing the jewel and redeeming the jewel, and it is also our

16. 'Feral cats and white oxen' is descriptive of certain types of trainees who are heavily deluded.

17. An allusion to Meditation Master Shakkyō Ezō yanking the nose of Master Seidō Chizō. Shakkyō was a great 'slayer' of the false self, who taught his fellow monk Seidō the meaning of the True Self (one's Nose). It was Shakkyō's True Self that did the pulling.

relinquishing a tile and redeeming a tile. Further, it also means thirty blows for not having relinquished them. No matter how much we human beings may make use of the strength of our mindfulness, it will never erode.

'The strength of concentration' is like a child getting its mother and like a mother getting her child. And it is like a child getting 'child' and a mother getting 'mother'. Be that as it may, it is not exchanging our head for a face, nor is it buying gold with gold. It is simply our chanting from our concentration growing ever louder.

'The strength of wise discernment' is ever deeper and far-reaching as the years and generations pass. It is like ferrying a boat's crossing to the Other Shore. This is why in ancient times someone said, "It is like the crossing was getting a ferry." The heart of what this is saying is, "The crossing, beyond question, is the ferry." A crossing that does not get in the way of a crossing we call 'a ferry'. In spring, the ice dissolves of itself.

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The Seven Branches Associated with Awakening

First, awakening to a preference for the Dharma
Second, awakening to being zealous in one's endeavors
Third, awakening to a delight in the Truth
Fourth, awakening to eliminating one's rough edges
Fifth, awakening to equanimity
Sixth, awakening to concentration
Seventh, awakening to mindfulness

'Awakening to a preference for the Dharma' is synonymous with Kanchi Sōsan's saying, "Let but a hair's breadth of discriminatory thought arise and you have made Heaven and Earth strangers to each other." Thus, as he also said, "The Way to the Ultimate is not hard; simply give up being picky and choosy."

'Awakening to being zealous in one's endeavors' is synonymous with never having endorsed robbing others in the marketplace. Whether buying for one's own sake or selling for one's own sake, both have their fixed price, and there is recognition of one's worth. Even if we seem to be bending over backwards in recommending others, a blow to our body does not break us. In never ceasing to offer anyone a trigger word, you will encounter the Trader who offers you, on His

part, the turning around of your heart.[18] So, before you have finished doing your donkey work, go about doing horse work.[19]

'Awakening to a delight in the Truth' is synonymous with the sympathy your grandma had when your blood was dripping from a cut. Leave the thousand hands and eyes of the Great Compassionate One to do their business. Plum blossoms are beginning to peep through the wintry snow—news of the coming spring. A great Master may still be cold, but even so, he will be freely swimming about, disporting like a fish, and overflowing with gales of laughter.

'Awakening to eliminating one's rough edges' means, when looking within yourself, not getting all absorbed in yourself, and, when looking outside yourself, not getting all absorbed in others. It means 'what I have gotten, you have not yet gotten.' It is ardently expressing It while going forth amidst all manner of beings.

'Awakening to equanimity' means that even though I have brought It, others may not accept It. It is just as the Chinese, when barefooted, learn to walk like Chinese, and as the Persians who go hunting for ivory tusks in the South Seas.

'Awakening to concentration' means before taking the initiative, preserving the Eye that exists before taking the initiative. It is our blowing our own nose. It is taking hold of our own tether and leading our own self. And, nevertheless, it is being able to let our domesticated water buffalo graze on its own.

'Awakening to mindfulness' means a pillar* of the temple going forth, walking the sky. Thus, even though we say that someone's mouth resembles a mallet and someone's Eye is like an eyebrow, still, this is a matter of burning sandalwood in a sandalwood forest or of a lion roaring in a lion's den.

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The Eight Branches of the Right Path
also called the Noble Eightfold Path

First, the branch of Right View
Second, the branch of Right Thought
Third, the branch of Right Speech
Fourth, the branch of Right Action

18. A trigger word is some remark which serves another as a trigger, or catalyst, for an awakening to the Truth.

19. Donkey work is the day-to-day plodding through one's training. While still training, one should also do the horse work, which is one's going forth wherever needed to help all sentient beings realize the Truth.

Fifth, the branch of Right Livelihood
Sixth, the branch of Right Effort
Seventh, the branch of Right Mindfulness
Eighth, the branch of Right Concentration

'The branch of Right View' is our cherishing the Eye of our True Self, which resides within. At the same time, prior to our body's arising, we were already endowed with the Eye. Even though this view was magnificently realized in the past, it is our own spiritual question coming forth and it will be experienced intimately in the future. In short, if one does not cherish the Eye of one's True Self, such a person is not an Ancestor of the Buddha.

'The branch of Right Thought' is the coming forth of all the Buddhas in the ten quarters when we cultivate this mode of thinking. As a result, the coming forth of the ten quarters and the coming forth of the Buddhas is what the time when we cultivate this mode of thinking refers to. When we cultivate this mode of thinking, we are beyond self and transcend other. Even so, at the very moment that we are completely involved in thinking about the Matter, we have directed our course towards Varanasi.[20] The place where this mode of thinking exists is Varanasi. The Old Buddha Yakusan once said, "What I was thinking about was based on not deliberately thinking about any particular thing." A monk then asked, "How can what anyone is thinking about be based on not deliberately thinking about something?" The Master replied, "It is a matter of 'what I am thinking about' not being the point." This is a matter of right thinking and right thought. Breaking your meditation pillow is what right thought is about.[21]

'The branch of Right Speech' is our Mute Self not being a mute. Those who are mutes among humans are not yet able to speak. Those in the realm of the Mute are not mutes. They do not admire themselves as saints, nor do they pile something spiritual upon themselves. It is their thoroughly exploring the Matter by hanging their mouths up on the wall. It is all the mouths being hung up on all the walls.

'The branch of Right Action' is our leaving home life behind and entering the Meditation Hall. It is our entering a mountain monastery to procure a realization. As Shakyamuni Buddha once said, "The thirty-seven methods of training are the actions of a monk." The actions of a monk go beyond the Greater* and Lesser Courses. There are various types of monks, such as Buddha monks,

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20. Varanasi, nowadays called Benares, was the place where the Buddha first gave voice to the Dharma after His awakening.

21. 'Breaking one's meditation pillow' is a metaphor for working hard at one's meditation practice.

bodhisattva monks, and shravaka monks. Those who have not yet left home life behind do not succeed to the inheritance of the Right Action of the Buddha's Dharma. They have not received the authentic Transmission of the Great Course of the Buddha's Dharma. Even though those who have remained in home life may have done some study of the Way as lay men and women, they have not left behind any traces of having become expert in the Way. Whenever anyone has become expert in the Way, that person has invariably left home life behind. How can those folks who are not up to leaving home life behind possibly devote themselves to attaining the rank of Buddha?

At the same time, for the past two or three hundred years, there have been many in Great Sung China who call themselves monks of the Zen tradition, saying, "Those who have remained in home life to study the Way and those who have left home life behind to study the Way are just the same." That bunch have turned themselves into dogs just for the sake of making the excrement and urine of lay people their food and drink.[22] Sometimes they say to rulers of countries and their ministers, "Your mind when conducting the affairs of state is exactly the same as the mind of Ancestors and Buddhas, for there is no other mind." Rulers and ministers, still ignorant of what real Teaching and genuine Dharma are, take great delight in bestowing such titles as Master upon them. Monks who talk like this are veritable Devadattas. They come out with such wild and childish drivel just so they can feed off the chirping and spitting of such lay folk—better to call it a child's whimpering. They are not of the family of the Seven Buddhas,* but are a band of devils and beasts. They do not know what 'body and mind' refers to, nor do they explore the Matter through training with a Master, nor do they understand what it means to leave home life behind both in body and in mind. They are in the dark about the politics of rulers and ministers, and it is as if they had never encountered the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors even in their dreams.

The lay practitioner Vimalakirti* resembled the Buddha when He was in the world, yet there were many ways in which what he taught was not yet complete, and there were a number of points which he had not yet fully mastered. The lay practitioner Hōon had a history of training under several Ancestors, but he was not permitted entrance into Yakusan's inner chambers, and he was never the equal of Baso, his ultimate teacher. His name is said to be linked with the term 'exploring through training', but his exploring through training was not real. With others, such

22. In this context, 'excrement and urine' is a derogatory metaphor for 'words and opinions', that is, for what the judgmental mind excretes. In Japanese, this terminology does not carry the vulgar sense that it has in English.

as Ri Fuba and Yō Bunkō, each thought he was tranquilly residing within his spiritual awakening, but neither had yet partaken of sugar dumplings, much less of a painted rice cake, or even less, of the rice gruel of the Buddhas and Ancestors, for they still did not possess a monk's alms bowl. Sad to say, their whole life as a skin bag* was in vain.

What I am universally recommending to sentient beings in lofty positions, to ordinary beings, to erudite scholarly beings, and to all other types of sentient beings in all ten quarters is that they follow the Tathagata's ways from the distant past by quickly leaving home life behind and training in the Way, so that they may attain the rank of Buddha and the rank of Ancestor. Do not listen to the incompetent words of those so-called 'Zen Masters' and their ilk. Because they do not understand what body is or what mind is, they speak such words. As likely as not, they are utterly lacking in compassion for sentient beings and have no thought of adhering to the Buddha Dharma. Only desiring to devote themselves to feeding off the urine and excrement of those who remain in home life, they are like vicious dogs—dogs with human faces, dogs in human hides. Thus they speak as they do. Do not sit down with them, do not converse with them, do not stop to train under them. While their human bodies are still alive, they have fallen into the world of the animals. If someone who has left home life behind had urine and excrement in abundance, these dogs would say that such a monk was preeminent. But they talk as they do because the urine and excrement of monks does not come up to the standards of these animals. Over more than two thousand years, there has been no trace appearing in the texts of the more than five thousand scrolls of the Canon which says that the intentions of those who remain in home life and of those who have left home life behind are exactly the same, either in theory or in practice. No Buddha or Ancestor has ever proclaimed such a thing in over fifty generations of our lineage and during the more than forty ages.[23] Even if there were a person—one who had left home behind—who broke or neglected the Precepts, or did not keep to the Teaching, or was lacking in wise discernment, such a one would surpass the discernment and the keeping to the Precepts of one who had remained in home life, because becoming a monk is Wisdom itself, realization Itself, the Way Itself, and the Dharma Itself. Even though those in home life may have good spiritual roots and are behaving quite meritoriously, they may well overlook the good spiritual roots and meritorious behavior of a monastic's body and mind. During the Buddha's whole lifetime of teaching, not one person in lay life fully

23. The fifty generations are from Makakashō through Tendō Nyojō, whereas the more than forty ages are from the first of the Seven Buddhas up through Daikan Enō and beyond.

realized the Way. This was due to their home life not being a suitable place for them to learn the Way of the Buddha and because their worldly distractions were so many.

When we explore the body and mind of that bunch who assert that a mind which is engaged in myriad affairs of state and the mind of an Ancestral Teacher are the same, it is obvious that they never encountered the mind and body of the Buddhas and Ancestors, nor was the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors ever Transmitted to those folks. Sad to say, even though they were encountering the True Teaching of the Buddha, they nevertheless became beasts.

Because this is the way things are, Enō, the Old Buddha of Sōkei, immediately took leave of his mother in order to seek a Master: this was Right Action. Before he heard the *Diamond-cutting Scripture* and gave rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood, he lived at home, working as a woodcutter. After hearing the *Diamond-cutting Scripture*, he was infused with Its lingering fragrance. So, dropping off his heavy burden of wood, he left home life behind. Keep in mind that once body and mind become so infused with the Buddha Dharma, it is said that remaining in home life is no longer possible. It has been the same for all the Buddhas and Ancestors. That bunch who say that one does not need to leave home life behind are committing an offense even more serious than those of the five treacherous deeds* and they are even more savage than Devadatta. Know that what they are doing is even worse than what the six male monastics, the six female monastics, as well as the eighteen monastics did during the Buddha's time, so do not converse with them.[24] A whole lifetime is not that long. You do not have the time to converse with such devils and beasts. And what is more, you received these human bodies and minds of yours as a result of seeds from encountering and hearing the Buddha Dharma in past lives. They are like temple tools for public use. They are not to be turned into a band of devils, nor are they to be aligned with any band of devils. Do not forget your deep obligation to the Buddhas and Ancestors by listening to the baying of these ferocious dogs, but protect and preserve the virtue of the milk of the Dharma. And do not sit or sup with these wicked dogs.

When Our Founding Ancestor, the Old Buddha of Mount Sūzan,[25] left far behind the western Buddhist country of India to come east to the remote land of China, the True Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors was Transmitted through

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24. These three groups were comprised of monks who had difficulties with their training, and therefore left the assembly of the Buddha.

25. That is, Bodhidharma.

his person. If he had not left worldly life behind in order to realize the Way, such a thing would not have been possible. Before he came from the West, human beings of all stations had never encountered or heard of the True Teaching. So, you should keep in mind that the true Transmission of the true Teaching was made possible due to the spiritually beneficial action of his having left home life behind.

Our Great Master, the revered Shakyamuni, graciously set aside the rank of his father the king and did not succeed him as his heir, but not because the king's rank was not valued. Rather, it was done that He might succeed as heir to the most precious rank of Buddha. The rank of Buddha is the rank of someone who has left home life behind. It is a rank which those in the three worlds of desire, form, and without form—both those in lofty positions and ordinary human beings—all bow to out of deepest respect. It is not a place whose seat is to be shared with a Lord Brahma or a Lord Shakra. How much less is it a rank whose seat is to be shared with earthly human rulers or scholastic lords of erudition, for it is the rank of supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. Those of this precious rank can give expression to the Dharma that carries beings to the Other Shore and can send forth their radiance which manifests auspicious signs. The actions of those who have left home life behind are the very stuff of Right Actions; they are the actions long-cherished by Buddhas, including the Seven Buddhas. It is a place that is not fully realized if it is not done by 'each Buddha on His own, together with all Buddhas'. Those who have not yet left home life behind should show their respect to those who have already left home life behind and serve them. They should bow their heads in homage to them and offer them alms, setting aside both body and life.

Shakyamuni Buddha once said, "To leave home life behind and accept the Precepts is to be the seed of a Buddha, for such a one has already become enlightened." So, keep in mind, what we call 'becoming enlightened' means leaving home life behind. Someone who has not yet left home life behind is, sad to say, one sunk in misery. In short, I cannot say how often during the Buddha's lifetime He praised the merits of leaving home life behind. Our honored Shakyamuni sincerely voiced this, and all Buddhas have certified it. Those who have left home life behind and who are breaking Precepts and failing to explore the Matter with their Master have realized the Way, whereas those who have remained in home life have not yet realized the Way. When royalty respectfully bow to male or female monastics, these monastics do not return the bow; when those in lofty positions bow to the ones who have left home behind, both the male and the female monastics never return the bow. This is because the merit of leaving home life behind is unsurpassed. It is like this because, if they were to receive bows from male and female monastics—that is, those who have left home life behind—the

mansions and palaces of those in lofty positions would instantly fall into ruin and decay, along with all their resplendence and good fortune.

In sum, as the Buddha Dharma gradually progressed eastward, there were those who realized the Way by leaving home life behind; they have been as common as rice and flax plants, bamboo and reeds. But there was not even one of them who realized the Way whilst remaining in home life. Once the Buddha Dharma reached their eyes and ears, they immediately engaged themselves in leaving home life behind. I have come to realize clearly that remaining in home life is not a place for the Buddha Dharma to reside. At the same time, that bunch who say that the body and mind of those who are engaged in conducting affairs of state is exactly the same as the body and mind of the Buddhas and Ancestors have never encountered or heard the Teaching of the Buddha. They are criminals in the darkest of hells. They are foolish people who have not even seen or heard what they themselves are saying. They are traitors to their land. Their attempt to equate a mind that is engaged in worldly affairs with the mind of the Buddhas and Ancestors is done just for the delight of rulers; it is an attempt undertaken because of the preeminence of the Buddha Dharma. You need to remember that the Buddha Dharma is what is preeminent. Now, it may happen that the mind engaged with worldly affairs is temporarily in the same state as the mind of the Buddhas and Ancestor—and quite naturally—but whenever the body and mind of the Buddhas and Ancestors spontaneously resembles the body and mind of someone engaged with worldly affairs, Theirs will not be the body and mind of one engaged with worldly affairs. ‘Zen Masters’ and their like who say that the mind of someone engaged in worldly affairs is completely equivalent to the mind of Buddhas and Ancestors do not have a clue as to how the human mind works. And as to the working of the mind of Buddhas and Ancestors, well, they haven’t seen that even in their dreams!

Speaking more broadly, Lord Brahma, Lord Shakrendra, human rulers, erudite lords of scholarship, demon lords, and the like—each and every one of them—need to give up their obsession with good fortune within the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form, leave their home life behind, accept the Precepts, and then put into practice the Way of the Buddhas and the Ancestors, for this will be a cause for Buddhahood to be realized over vast eons. Do you not see? If old Vimalakirti had left home life behind, he would have encountered a monastic Vimalakirti who was even superior to the lay Vimalakirti. Today, it would be hard to encounter a Subhuti, or a Shariputra, or a Manjushri,* or a Maitreya,* let alone

half a Vimalakirti, much less three, four, or five Vimalakirtis![26] Should it be the case that you are not encountering or coming to know three, four, or five Vimalakirtis, well, we are not encountering, or knowing, or supporting, or relying upon even one Vimalakirti. If we are not yet supporting or relying upon one Vimalakirti, then we are not encountering Vimalakirti as a Buddha. When we do not encounter Vimalakirti as a Buddha, Vimalakirti does not yet exist as a Manjushri, or as a Maitreya, or as a Subhuti, or as a Shariputra, to say nothing of a Vimalakirti being the great earth with its mountains and rivers, or his being grasses and trees, tiles and stones, or wind and rain, water and fire, or his being, past, present, and future! The reason that Vimalakirti's luminosity and meritorious virtues are not apparent is because he had not left home life behind. Had Vimalakirti left home life behind, he would have shown those meritorious virtues. The so-called 'Zen Masters' of the T'ang and Sung Dynasties and their like had never arrived at this point, so they vainly considered Vimalakirti as being right in whatever he did. These folks, sad to say, did not know the spoken Teaching and were in the dark about the Buddha Dharma.

Furthermore, many of that bunch went so far as to say that the words and ways of Vimalakirti and the Venerable Shakyamuni were equal. These too have never considered, much less known, the Buddha Dharma or the Way of the Ancestors, nor did they even know Vimalakirti himself. They say that what Vimalakirti's silence was pointing out to bodhisattvas by his not using words was comparable to the Tathagata's not using words for some person's sake. I would say that they are greatly ignorant of the Buddha Dharma and have little ability for studying the Way. The Tathagata's use of words was already different from that of others, and his not using words must also not be likened to that of others. Thus, the Tathagata's moment of utter silence and Vimalakirti's moment of silence should not even be considered analogous. When we explore the abilities of that bunch who imagine that the words Vimalakirti spoke to convey the Dharma were different from those of the Tathagata, but the silences of the two were undoubtedly the same, we see that they have not even come close to where the Buddha is. Sad to say, these people have not yet seen His form or heard His voice, much less have they experienced the glorious light that leaps forth from His form and voice. And even less do they know that they must learn what the Silence within silence means, to say nothing of their even hearing It! Generally speaking, people's understanding of movement and silence differ, so how can they say that the Venerable Shakyamuni is like any of these types or even different from them? That bunch who have not

26. Subhuti and Shariputra were two of the Buddha's most preeminent disciples.

explored the Matter within the inner quarters of the Buddhas and Ancestors talk like this.

Again, many wrong-headed people fancy that spoken teachings and physical expressions are what is provisionally true, whereas silence and physical quietude are the real truth. This kind of talk is also not the Buddha Dharma. It is what those who pass on what they have heard about of the Scriptures and of the teachings of Brahma or Ishvara or their like speculate about. How could the Buddha's Teaching ever be mixed up with 'movement versus stillness'? Through your training you need to explore that there is movement and stillness within the Buddha's Way, and there is no movement and stillness therein! And that there is our encountering movement and silence, and there is movement and silence encountering us! You veteran trainees of this very moment, do not slacken!

When we look at Great Sung China today, those folks who are exploring the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors through their training are all but extinct; there may not even be two or three left. There are just those who believe that Vimalakirti was right and as a result, he had total silence, whereas we today are lacking in total silence and therefore are far inferior to Vimalakirti. Moreover, such folks lack the vital, absolute Way. Likewise, there are those who hold to the opinion that Vimalakirti's total silence is in no way different from the Venerable Shakyamuni's utter silence. They completely lack the light of illuminating discernment. We must admit that none of the folks who say things like this have ever encountered, heard, or explored the Buddha Dharma through their training. Do not think that since they are people of Great Sung China, what they assert must be the Teaching of the Buddha. The reason for this can be easily clarified: Right Action means the actions of a monk, which is something that is beyond the ken of those who write scholarly commentaries on Scriptures and those who teach academic Buddhism. What we call 'the actions of a monk' is our doing our utmost whilst in the Meditation Hall, it is our bowing in deepest gratitude whilst in the Buddha Hall, and it is our washing our face in the wash-up shed. Furthermore, bowing with hands in gasshō,* burning incense, and heating water are all Right Action. Not only is it exchanging your tail for your head, it is exchanging your head with your Head, exchanging your mind with your Mind, exchanging 'the Buddha' with Buddha, exchanging 'the truth' with Truth, for these are all branchings of the Path of Right Action. If you mistakenly engage in just talking about Buddha Dharma, His eyebrows will droop down and His countenance will sadden.

'The branch of Right Livelihood' is early morning gruel and midday rice. It is staying in the monastery grounds and delighting in single-minded pursuit of the Way. It is the Master sitting on the wooden Dharma seat and directly pointing to

the Truth. The fewer than twenty trainees in the assembly of old Jōshū is a manifestation of Right Livelihood. And Yakusan's assembly of less than ten was the lifeblood of Right Livelihood. And Fun'yō's assembly of seven or eight was also a place where Right Livelihood was anchored, because everyone there had kept clear of false livelihood.

Shakyamuni Buddha once remarked that shravakas—those who hear the Dharma and do not heed it, but seek a rigid code—have not yet attained Right Livelihood. Thus, the teachings, practice, and realizations of shravakas are still not Right Livelihood. At the same time, there are commonplace people of recent days who say, "We should not separate shravakas from bodhisattvas, but should adopt both their behavior and their precepts and monastic regulations." Using the standards of the shravakas of the Lesser Course, they pass judgment on the everyday behavior and practices of the bodhisattvas of the Greater Course. As Shakyamuni Buddha once said, "A shravaka's keeping of a precept is a bodhisattva's acting contrary to a precept." Thus, what shravakas consider to be their keeping of the precepts, when viewed from the perspective of the Bodhisattva Precepts, are all preceptual breakages of the shravaka precepts. The other everyday practices of maintaining one's concentration and applying one's wise discernment are just the same. For instance, even though a Precept like 'cease from killing whatever lives' naturally appears to be the same for a shravaka and a bodhisattva, there is certainly a difference between them, one which surpasses the separation of the heavens and the earth.[27] And how much less could the principles genuinely Transmitted from Buddha to Buddha and Ancestor to Ancestor possibly be the same as those of the shravakas! Not only is there Right Livelihood, there is also Pure Life. So, by exploring the Matter through training with an Ancestor of the Buddha, yours will become Right Livelihood. Do not adopt the opinions and explanations of such people as scholarly commentators. Because theirs is not yet Right Livelihood, they do not live an enlightened life.

'The branch of Right Effort' is the daily conduct of dredging out your whole being. And through dredging out your whole being, you fashion a truly human countenance. It is your entering the Buddha Hall, riding upside down on a water buffalo, doing one lap around the hall, two laps, three, four, five laps, so that nine nines comes out to eighty-two.[28] It is your repaying your indebtedness to others

27. The difference lies in the shravaka's practice of limiting understanding of the Precepts to the literal, whereas the bodhisattva understanding goes far beyond just the literal, taking the Precepts on the broadest and deepest levels possible.

28. That is, being willing to undertake what seems impossible or inconceivable.

thousands of myriad times over. It is your turning your head left and right, up and down. It is your changing your countenance as it goes left and right, up and down. It is your entering your Master's private quarters and your going to the Dharma Hall.[29] It is your mutually encountering your true Master in Bōshū Pavilion, and your mutually encountering your true Master on Useki Peak.[30] It is your mutually encountering your true Master within the Buddha Hall. It is just like saying, "When seeing one person reflected in two facing mirrors, there are three figures."

'The branch of Right Mindfulness' is our being aware that eighty or ninety percent of the time we are deluding ourselves. Learning to give rise to wise discernment within mindfulness is to abandon our father and run away from home. To study that wise discernment arises effortlessly within mindfulness is to tie oneself up in knots. To say that Right Mindfulness means being blank-minded is non-Buddhist. Also, you should not regard the spirits of earth, water, fire, and wind as forms of mindfulness, nor should you consider the turning upside down of the mental functions of consciousness, thought, and perception to be mindfulness. Remember, "You have gotten what my Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow are" is Right Mindfulness.

'The branch of Right Concentration' is the dropping off of 'Buddha' and 'Ancestor'. It is the dropping off of 'Right Concentration'. It is what others can rejoice in. It is your making a Nose by cutting open the crown of your head. It is the raising aloft the udumbara blossom within the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. Within the udumbara blossom are Makakashōs, their faces broken wide with smiles, on hundreds of thousands of petals. Having been made continual use of throughout His life for ever so long, Shakyamuni's wooden paddle finally broke. That is why He spent six years, dropping off whatever sprouted up, until that one night when His flower blossomed. When the conflagration at kalpa's ending is blazing up and the three-thousand great-thousandfold world is being totally consumed, we just follow upon what arises and go forth.

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29. Entering the Master's private quarters to hear a Dharma talk and to do private interviews with the Master is a privilege for Transmitted monks, whereas all trainees, including Transmitted monks, are expected to go to the Dharma Hall to hear the Master's Dharma talks for the community.

30. Bōshū Pavilion and Useki Peak are two scenic places on Mount Seppō used as meditation sites.

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These thirty-seven methods of training to realize enlightenment are the very Eyes and Nose of the Buddhas and Ancestors, Their Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow, Their Hands, Feet, and Countenances. The Buddhas and Ancestors continually explored through Their training these thirty-seven methods of training to realize enlightenment, one by one. At the same time, they are the one thousand and sixty ways our spiritual question manifests: they are our methods of training to realize enlightenment. We should sit until we break through them, and then let them drop off.

Given to the assembly at Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province on the twenty-fourth day of the second lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (April 3, 1244).

Copied by me in the office of the Abbot's assistant in the same temple on the ninth day of the third lunar month in the same year (April 17, 1244).

Ejō

71

On Turning the Wheel of the Dharma

(Tembōrin)

Translator's Introduction: The main point of this discourse is that even if a Buddha or an Ancestor quotes a line from a work of questionable authenticity, it may still be valid Teaching if it results from, and with, a turning of the Wheel of the Dharma.

My late Master, the Old Buddha of Tendō, once began a Dharma talk by saying, "The World-honored One once remarked, 'When someone gives rise to Truth by returning to the Source, the whole of space in all ten quarters falls away and vanishes.'" My Master, commenting on this quote, made the following remarks:

> This is what was expounded long ago by the World-honored One, but His Teaching has not escaped from people's capacity to create thoroughly strange and wondrous interpretations of It. I, Tendō, am not like that. When someone gives rise to Truth by returning to the Source, that 'begging child' will have broken his rice bowl.[1] The Venerable Abbot Goso Hōen once said, "When someone gives rise to Truth by returning to the Source, he will keep bumping up against the Space in all the ten quarters."[2] The Venerable Abbot Busshō Hōtai once said, "When someone gives rise to Truth by returning to the Source, for him the whole of space in the ten quarters will simply be, for him, the whole of space in the ten quarters." Meditation Master Engo Kokugon once said, "When someone gives rise to Truth by returning to the Source, he will embellish the whole of Space in the ten quarters with his brocaded flowerings."

I, Dōgen, of Daibutsu-ji Temple would put it this way, "When someone gives rise to Truth by returning to the Source, the whole of space in the ten quarters gives rise to Truth by returning to the Source." What has initially been quoted as,

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1. That is, such a one no longer needs to beg for the Truth.
2. That is, having awakened to the Truth, he will keep encountering Buddha Nature, no matter which way he may turn.

"When someone gives rise to Truth by returning to the Source, the whole of space in all ten quarters falls away and vanishes," is a verse from the *Shurangama Scripture*. This verse has been cited by various Buddhas and Ancestors alike. Up to this very day, this verse is truly the Bones and Marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors. It is the very Eye of the Buddhas and Ancestors. As to my intention in saying so, there are those who say that the ten-fascicle *Shurangama Scripture* is a spurious scripture, whereas others say that it is a genuine Scripture: both views have persisted from long in the past down to our very day.[3] There are older translations and there are newer translations, but the one considered spurious is the doubtful translation made during the Chinese Shenlung era (705-706). Be that as it may, the Venerable Abbot Goso Hōen, the Venerable Abbot Busshō Hōtai, and my late Master, the Old Buddha of Tendō, have just now recommended this verse. So, this verse has already been set in motion by the Dharma Wheel of the Buddhas and Ancestors; it is the turning of Their Dharma Wheel. As a result, this verse has already set Them in motion; it has already given voice to Them. Because it is set in motion by Them and sets Them in motion, even were the Scripture a spurious one, if They continue to offer its turning, then it is a genuine Scripture of the Buddhas and Ancestors, as well as the Dharma Wheel intimately associated with Them. For instance, even tiles and stones, even yellow leaves, even udumbara blossoms, even robes of gold brocade, once they have been held aloft by a Buddha or an Ancestor, they become the Dharma Wheel of the Buddha. They are the Buddha's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching.

You need to keep in mind that when sentient beings transcend a genuine awakening,[4] they are an Ancestor of the Buddha, they are the teachers and disciples of the Buddhas and the Ancestors, and they are the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors. They no longer consider sentient beings who were their brothers to be their brothers, but treat the Buddhas and Ancestors as their brothers. Likewise, even if this verse were from a text considered to be spurious, it is the verse for the present moment, it is the verse of a

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3. A spurious scripture is one that purports to be a genuine translation of a Sanskrit original, but is not considered canonical because it contradicts fundamental Buddhist doctrine. In this discourse, 'a genuine Scripture' refers to one that was originally composed in Chinese, but one that does not contradict basic Buddhist teaching.

   The *Shurangama Scripture* discussed here should not be confused with the three-fascicle and unequivocally genuine *Shurangama Samadhi Scripture*, translated by Kumārajīva from the Sanskrit.

4. That is, having dropped off body and mind, one then drops off 'dropping off'.

Buddha and the verse of an Ancestor, and it should not be grouped with other phrases or verses from that particular Scripture. Even if there are other verses in that Scripture that far surpass this verse, you should not consider each and every passage to be absolutely, or even provisionally, a saying of the Buddha or the words of an Ancestor, nor should you treat them as the Eye for exploring the Great Matter.*

There are many reasons why you should not compare this particular verse with the other verses. Let's take up just one of them. What is called 'the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma' is a matter for Buddhas and Ancestors. There have not been any Buddhas or Ancestors who have not turned the Wheel of the Dharma. Some will turn the Wheel of the Dharma by using sound and form to free Their disciples from attachment to sound and form, and some will turn the Wheel of the Dharma by Their leaping free of sound and form, and some will turn the Wheel of the Dharma by scraping out Their Eyes, and some will turn the Wheel of the Dharma by holding Their Fist aloft. And there are times when the disciple comprehends what his Nose is or comprehends what the Unbounded is, which are instances of the Wheel of the Dharma naturally turning Itself. To comprehend what this verse is about is to grasp what the morning star is about, what one's Nose is about, what the plum blossom is about, and what the Unbounded is about. It is comprehending what Buddhas and Ancestors are about and what the Wheel of the Dharma is about. The underlying principle of these is, clearly, what the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma is about.

'Turning the Wheel of the Dharma' means doing your utmost to explore the Matter through your training with your Master without leaving the temple throughout the rest of your life. I call it sitting with others on the long meditation benches and asking for the Master's benevolence whilst doing your utmost to train in the Way.

Delivered to the assembly on the twenty-seventh day of the second lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (April 6, 1244), whilst in Echizen Province at Kippō-ji temple.

Copied by me on the first day of the third lunar month in the same year (April 8, 1244), whilst in the quarters of the Abbot's assistant in the same temple.

Ejō

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* See *Glossary.*

72

On the Meditative State of One's True Nature

(Jishō Zammai)

Translator's Introduction: In the first part of this discourse, Dōgen explores what the proper attitude of mind is for one who is serious about coming to know what one's True Nature is and how It functions.

In the latter part of the discourse, Dōgen devotes considerable time to presenting stories concerning the Rinzai Master Daie, who is credited with introducing the method of kōan study that is particular to the Rinzai tradition. Dōgen's purpose seems to be to describe someone who exemplifies the failure to realize the meditative state of his True Nature. Because what is happening in these stories is not always easily grasped and the significance of the exchanges may not be immediately apparent, it has seemed worthwhile to supply more extensive footnotes for the sake of modern readers.

What has been authentically Transmitted by the Buddhas from the Seven Buddhas* on is that the meditative state of one's training is identical with one's inherent enlightenment. In other words, we sometimes submit ourselves to what a good spiritual friend advises and sometimes we submit ourselves to what Scriptural texts advise, for these are both the Eye of the Buddhas and Ancestors. This is why the following dialogue occurred.

> The Old Buddha Daikan Enō once put the question to a monk, asking, "And is this a substitute for training and enlightenment?"[1]
>
> The monk replied, "It is not that there is no training and enlightenment, but rather, there is nothing to be had that will stain It."

So, keep in mind that one's training and enlightenment being unstained by attachments is a characteristic of Buddhas and Ancestors. It is the meditative state of the Buddhas and Ancestors being experienced like a flash of lightning, like a gust of wind, like a roll of thunder.

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* See *Glossary.*

1. The monk in question was Enō's Dharma heir, Nangaku Ejō. Enō's question was in response to Ejō's statement, "Were I to try to put the One Matter into words, they would miss the mark."

At the very moment when we submit ourselves to what a good spiritual friend advises, sometimes we see half of each other's Countenance, sometimes we see half of each other's Body, sometimes we see the whole of each other's Countenance, and sometimes we see the whole of each other's Heart and Mind. And there are times when we both see half of our own self and times when we both see half of each other's self. There are times when we become aware that a deity's head is enveloped in hair and times when we notice that a demon's countenance has sprouted horns.[2] There are times when we come, attending on others so that we might rescue all manner of beings from their suffering, and there are times when we go, transforming ourselves amongst those with whom we live. In situations like these, we do not know how many thousands of myriad times we have discarded our sense of self for the sake of the Dharma. And we do not know for how many billions of eons we have sought the Dharma for the sake of our own self. This is our basing our life upon submitting ourselves to what a good spiritual friend advises, and it is the state of our exploring through our training what Self is and how we may submit ourselves to that Self. There was the occasion when Makakashō broke out into a smile when he saw the twinkle in Shakyamuni's eye. And Eka bowed to Bodhidharma in deepest respect upon realizing the latter's Marrow, which is connected with Eka's having 'cut off his arm'.[3]

In summary, from the sequence of the Seven Buddhas down though the Sixth Chinese Ancestor and beyond, good spiritual teachers who have encountered the Self have been more than just one or two. And good spiritual teachers who could see It in others are not limited to the past nor are they limited to the present.

When we submit ourselves to Scriptural Writings, we thoroughly explore Their Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow. When we let go of our own skin and flesh, bones and marrow, the Peach Blossom is seen jutting out from our Eye, and the sound of the Bamboo is heard thundering in our Ear.

In general, when we are following the path of studying Scriptures, Scriptures truly come forth. What we call Scriptures are the whole world of the ten quarters, the great earth with its mountains and rivers, grasses and trees, self and other. And They are our eating meals, putting on our clothes, and doing our daily activities. When we study the Way by submitting ourselves to each of the Scriptural texts,

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2. That is, there are times when the Master seems to resemble a lay person, just as there are times when the Master seems like a raging bull.

3. The Second Chinese Ancestor, Taiso Eka, is said to have cut off his arm in order to find the Truth. This 'severing' may refer to giving up one's attachments rather than to a literal, physical act.

one by one, the thousands of myriad volumes of Scriptures that we have not yet encountered are emerging right in front of us. Fortunately, They contain verses stating the Matter* with words of affirmation and poems clearly stating It with words of negation.[4] When we have succeeded in encountering Them, we employ our body and mind to explore Them through our training, exhausting long eons and making use of Them over long periods of time. Through this, we ultimately reach our goal of understanding Them thoroughly. When we explore Them by letting go of body and mind, we scrape out all traces of duality and leap beyond the first signs of anything arising, while, at the same time, we inevitably realize the merits of accepting and retaining the Scriptures.

The Sanskrit texts of India that have been translated into Chinese books of Dharma number barely five thousand scrolls. Among these are the three vehicles, the five vehicles, the six divisions, and the twelve divisions. All these are Scriptural texts that you should study and follow. Even if we were to attempt to stay aloof from Them, we could not. Thus, sometimes They are 'the Eye' and sometimes They are what 'my Marrow' is.[5] When horns on the head are right, then a tail will be right.[6] Whether we receive Them from others or impart Them to others, They are just one's Eye springing to life as we drop off self and other. They are simply the conferring of 'my Marrow' as we free ourselves from the delusion of self and other. Because both the Eye and 'my Marrow' are beyond self and beyond other, the Buddhas and Ancestors have continued to accurately Transmit Them and confer Them from the distant past, to this present moment, and to the next present moment. There is the traveling staff* as a Scripture, which gives free expression to the Dharma in every conceivable way, spontaneously breaking up 'emptiness' and breaking up 'existence'. And there is the ceremonial hossu* as a Scripture, as it sweeps away snow and sweeps away frost. And there are the one or two sessions of seated meditation as Scriptures. And there is the kesa* as a Scripture, which has ten scrolls per volume. These are what Buddhas and Ancestors safeguard and keep to. Following such 'Scriptures' as These, we awaken to training and realize the Way. And there are times when we bring forth into existence the face of someone in a lofty position or the face of some ordinary

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4. That is, some statements express what the Matter is, whereas other statements express what the Matter is not.

5. 'Eye' refers to spiritual 'seeing' as the Master 'sees', and 'my Marrow' refers to what one 'sees', which is completely in accord with one's Master.

6. To paraphrase, in either case the Scriptures are right from beginning to end.

person, and times when we bring forth the countenance of the Sun or the countenance of the Moon, as we do our utmost to realize our pursuit of Scriptures.

At the same time, whether people are following a good spiritual teacher or following the Scriptures, all such persons are following their True Self. The Scriptural texts are, naturally, the Scriptural texts of Self, and good spiritual teachers are, naturally, good spiritual teachers of Self. Thus, you should investigate through your training that thorough training means thoroughly training oneself, that studying the hundreds of things which sprout up like grass means studying oneself, that studying the myriad things that take root and branch out like trees means studying oneself, and that this self is, of necessity, synonymous with making such an effort. By exploring like this through your training, you drop off self and you promise enlightenment to yourself.

Accordingly, in the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors there are tools for awakening to one's True Self and for realizing what that Self truly is. If there were no Buddhas or Ancestors who were genuine Dharma heirs, there would be no genuine Transmission. But there are tools that Dharma heir after Dharma heir has received, for were there not the Bones and Marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors, there would not be a genuine Transmission.

Because we explore the Matter in this way, when we pass on the Transmission for the sake of others, we confer it by saying such things as "You have gotten what my Marrow is" and "I have the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching which I confer on Makakashō." Expressing It for someone's sake does not necessarily depend on self and others. To express It for the sake of others is to express It for one's own sake. It is one's Self and another's Self harmoniously hearing and expressing the same thing. One ear is hearing and one ear is expressing: one tongue is expressing and one tongue is hearing. The same holds true for the sense organs of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind, as well as for their forms of consciousness and their sense objects. Further, there is one Body and there is one Mind, and there is enlightenment and there is training. It is the hearing and expressing of one's ears, and it is the hearing and expressing of one's tongue. Even though we may have expressed an exception to the rule yesterday for the sake of others, today we are expressing the established rule for our own sake. In this way, the faces of the sun line up one after another, as do the faces of the moon.

To give expression to the Dharma for the sake of others and to put the Dharma into practice for oneself is to hear the Dharma, to clarify what It is, and to realize It for many lives. Even in this life, if we are sincere in giving expression to It for the sake of others, it will be easy for us to realize the Dharma. If we help others to hear and promote the Dharma, we will establish good causes for our own learning of the Dharma. We will establish good causes both physically and

mentally. Should we hinder others from hearing the Dharma, then we ourselves will be hindered in hearing the Dharma. To express the Dharma, as well as to hear It over many lives in many bodies, is to hear the Dharma over many generations. It is to hear It once more in this generation as well as hearing the Dharma that has been genuinely Transmitted to us from the past. We are born in the Dharma and we die in the Dharma, and so, having had the Dharma genuinely Transmitted to us whilst being within the whole universe of the ten quarters, we listen to It in life after life and train with It in body after body. Since we have made life after life manifest in the Dharma and have made body after body into Dharma, we bring together each molecule of dust and the whole realm of thoughts and things, and we help them to realize the Dharma.

Thus, having heard a verse whilst in eastern regions, when we come to some western region, we should give expression to it for someone's sake. This means that we do our utmost, first and foremost, to listen to it and give expression to it in our own way and that we simultaneously practice and experience our eastern self and our western self. In any case, we should delight in having our own body and mind keep close company with the Buddha's Teaching and with the words and ways of the Ancestors, to say nothing of our hoping and intending to do so, and to our putting Them into practice. We should extend our practice from an hour to a whole day until we have extended it from a year to a whole lifetime. We should give free rein to the Buddha Dharma as our very essence. In this way, we will not pass through life after life in vain pursuits.

At the same time, if you have not yet fully clarified the Matter, do not think that you cannot express It for someone's sake. Were you to wait until you had fully clarified It, you would not be equal to the task even for immeasurable eons. Even if you clarify what a human Buddha is, you will need to clarify what a celestial Buddha is. Even if you clarify what the heart of a Mountain is, you will need to clarify what the heart of the Water is. Even if you clarify what the causes and conditions are for the arising of thoughts and things, you will need to clarify what makes the causes and conditions for the arising of thoughts and things an irrelevant issue. Even if you clarify what the environs of the Buddhas and Ancestors are, you will need to clarify what is above and beyond Buddhas and Ancestors. If you are aiming at first completely clarifying these within your lifetime and only then acting for the benefit of others, you are not doing your utmost, nor are you being stout-hearted, nor are you exploring the Matter through your training with your Master.

In short, as someone who is studying the words and ways of the Buddhas and Ancestors, after you have explored through your training a single method or a single model, you then enthusiastically let your intention to help others rise to the very heavens. Accordingly, we let go of 'self and other'. Further, if you thoroughly

awaken to your Self, you will have thoroughly awakened to others. And if you can thoroughly awaken to others, you will have thoroughly awakened to your Self. Even though we call the model of a Buddha 'One who has been born wise', if such a person has not received the Teaching through a Master, that person cannot realize It through direct bodily experience. If those born wise have not yet encountered a Master, they do not know what is beyond being born wise and they do not know what the Unborn and Unknowing is. Even though we speak of those who have been born wise, that does not mean that they will know the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors; only by exploring It through their training with their Master will they come to know It. Being thoroughly awakened to one's Self and being thoroughly awakened to the Self of others is the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors. They just need to turn their attention to exploring their own beginner's mind and do the same with exploring the beginner's mind of others. In bringing out from that beginner's mind the harmonization of self and other, they will be able to arrive at harmonization with the Ultimate and they will be able to promote the diligent efforts of others just as they do their own.

At the same time, upon hearing such phrases as 'awakening to one's True Self' and 'realizing what that Self truly is', rude and boorish people think that they do not need to receive Transmission from a Master, but need only to do self-study. This is a great mistake. Those who erroneously consider everything to be based on their personal ruminations and discriminations and have not received the Teaching through a Master are non-Buddhist followers of Indian naturalism.[7] How could that bunch who do not understand this possibly call themselves persons of the Buddha's Way? What is more, upon hearing the phrase 'awakening to one's True Self', they reckon that it refers to the accumulation of the five skandhas,* and so equate it with the self-discipline of the Lesser Course.* There are many folks who do not understand the difference between the Greater Course* and the Lesser Course, and many of them call themselves offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Even so, what bright-eyed person would be deceived by such folks?

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During the Shaohsing era (1131-1162) in Great Sung China, there was a certain Sōkō, later known as Meditation Master Daie of Mount Kinzan. He was originally a scholastic student of Scriptural texts and commentaries. During his travels from teacher to teacher, he became a follower of Meditation Master Shōri in Hsüanchou Province, with whom he studied Ummon's comments on kōan* stories,

7. Indian naturalism is the belief that everything arises spontaneously, without a cause.

as well as Setchō's verse and prose commentaries on kōan stories, which was the beginning of his formal training under a Master. Failing to grasp Ummon's turn of mind, he eventually went to train under Abbot Tōzan Dōbi, but Dōbi did not permit Sōkō to enter his private quarters. Abbot Dōbi was a Dharma heir of Abbot Fuyō Dōkai; he was head-and-shoulders above those idle ones who seat themselves in the back row. Even though 'Meditation Master' Sōkō did the training for a rather long time, he did not succeed in getting hold of his Master's Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow, much less did he even know that there is an Eye amidst the dust motes of defiling passions.[8]

And then there was the time when he had just heard of the practice in the Way of the Buddha's Ancestors of burning incense on one's elbow whilst requesting the Record of Transmission.[9] All eager, he begged Abbot Dōbi for the Record of Transmission. However, Abbot Dōbi refused his request.

> In time, the Abbot said to Sōkō, "If you want to receive the Record of Transmission, do not be in such a hurry. Just by all means do your utmost to be diligent in your training here and now. What you are asking the Buddhas and Ancestors for is never given indiscriminately. It is not that I am unwilling to bestow It. It is simply that you are not yet equipped with the Eye."
>
> Sōkō now responded, "Having been endowed with genuine eyes from the first, I have awakened to my True Self and have realized what that Self truly is, so how can you be so arbitrary and not give It to me?"
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> Abbot Dōbi laughed and left it at that.

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Later, Sōkō went to train under Abbot Tandō Bunjun.

> One day Tandō asked Sōkō, "And why are you lacking half your nose today?"[10]

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8. Since Sōkō was the name given to Daie upon being ordained as a novice monk, Dōgen's referring to him as Meditation Master Sōkō is clearly sarcastic, implying Daie's propensity for putting himself above his teachers, a trait that becomes more evident in what follows.

9. This was apparently a symbolic reenactment of Eka's offering up his arm when requesting Transmission from Bodhidharma.

10. Tandō is asking in effect, "Why don't you let go of that arrogant attitude of yours, so that you can realize the fullness of your innate True Nature?"

Sōkō replied, "I am a disciple in the monastery of the Hōbō Peak."[11]

Tandō responded, "Inaccurate, and far from the mark!"

Once when Sōkō was reading a Scripture, Tandō asked him, "What Scripture are you reading?"

Sōkō replied, "The Diamond-Cutting Scripture."[12]

Tandō then asked him, "It says in that Scripture, 'This Teaching is impartial; there is no higher or lower,' so why is Mount Ungo exalted and Mount Hōbō devalued?"[13]

Sōkō responded, "This Teaching is impartial, without high or low."[14]

Tandō responded, "You have certainly succeeded in making yourself into a full-fledged scholastic," and had him go do seated meditation.[15]

On another occasion, Tandō was watching a government official placing adornments on figures of the Ten Lords who preside over the ten hells. He asked Sōkō, who was still a novice who had not yet been Chief Junior,[16] "What is this official's family name?"

Sōkō responded, "His family name is Ryō."

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11. Hōbō Peak is the mountain on which Tandō's monastery lies, and by extension is a reference to Abbot Tandō himself. In effect, Daie is holding the Abbot responsible for his not having fully realized his True Self—an extremely rude remark.

12. This is the Scripture that Daikan Enō heard being recited, which triggered his kenshō.

13. Mount Ungo was a Sōtō monastery, whereas Mount Hōbō was a Rinzai monastery. Tandō is trying to point out to Sōkō his arrogant, judgmental way of thinking.

14. Sōkō's response is merely a mouthing of Scripture. He does not see the relevance of his Master's remark to his kōan of intellectual arrogance.

15. In Zen contexts, the term translated here as 'a full-fledged scholastic' is a strong rebuke, implying that someone is content to merely pursue intellectual interests, which he is not all that good at in the first place, rather than to do the practice needed to resolve the One Great Matter.

16. The Chief Junior is a novice monk who as been given the responsibility to oversee the behavior of junior monks for a variable period of time, in accordance with the guidance of the senior officers of the temple. A novice who has not yet done his stint in this position is considered to be still quite new to the ways of monastic life.

Tandō, stroking his own head with his hand, said, "My family name was Ryō, so how come I lack a hat like his?"

Sōkō replied, "Even though you lack a hat, your nose closely resembles his."

Tandō remarked, "You are wide of the mark!"[17]

One day, Tandō said to Sōkō, "Veteran novice Sōkō, you have been able to comprehend at once what my 'meditate here and now' means. Were I to let you explain it, you could put it in your own words. Were I to let you demonstrate how to do it, again, you could demonstrate it. Were I to let you compose comments on it in verse or prose, expound it to trainees, give the monks informal talks on it, or request teaching from a Master, you could also do any of these. But there is just one thing that you do not yet have in place. Do you know what it is?"[18]

Sōkō responded, "What is that thing that I do not yet have in place?"

Tandō answered, "There is just one bit of understanding that you lack: HAH![19] If you are lacking this one bit of understanding, then whenever we are in my private quarters and I give teaching for your sake, you have the mind of meditation, but as soon as you leave my quarters, it is completely gone. Whenever you are clearly pondering the Matter, you have the mind of meditation, but as soon as you do the least bit of drifting off into sleep, it is completely gone. If that is the way you are, how can you possibly be up to handling the matter of life and death?"

Sōkō replied, "That is precisely what Sōkō is suspicious of."

After a few years had passed, Tandō showed signs of illness. Sōkō asked him, "Venerable Abbot, a hundred years from now who

17. Sōkō's remark is ambiguous, but it sounds as if he were saying, 'The only difference between you and some government official is that you lack a fancy hat."

18. This question has a double meaning, the other being "Do you know what It is?"

19. HAH! represents the spontaneous sound made upon realizing what It truly is. It is also what is known as a kwatz, a sudden shout by a Master, used to interrupt the flow of intellectual thought in a disciple.

> should I rely upon that I may resolve this Great Matter of life and death?"[20]
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> Tandō responded to his request by saying, "There is a Master by the name of Engo Kokugon. He is from the State of Pa. I do not know him personally. Even so, if you meet him, I am sure you will be able to resolve this Matter. Once you have met him, do not go around visiting other Masters. In generations yet to come, explore the mind of meditation through your training."

When we examine just this one part of the stories, it is clear that Tandō still had not endorsed Sōkō. Even though time and time again Tandō aimed at opening Sōkō up, the latter ultimately kept missing that one experience, and there is no way of compensating for that, for one cannot omit that experience. Obviously, we can trust to Abbot Dōbi's clearly seeing Sōkō's makeup by his denying him the Record of Transmission yet continuing to encourage him, saying that there was still something that needed doing. Sōkō did not thoroughly explore his own statement, "That is precisely what Sōkō is suspicious of," nor did he drop it off, or break it open, or give rise to the Great Doubt, or break through that doubting.[21] In fact, his impertinence in asking for the Record of Transmission was his attempt to rush past his exploring the Matter with his Master. It was the utmost limit of a mind for which there was no such thing as Truth. It was an extreme lack of respect for the ancients. We must say that it was not only lacking in discretion, it was lacking in the markings of the Way. It was the height of negligence in the practice. Greedy for fame, craving personal gain, he attempted to crash his way into the private quarters of the Ancestors of the Buddha. It is so pitiful how he failed to understand what the Ancestors of the Buddha were saying to him in their talks and writings. He did not grasp that to study and train is to awaken to one's True Self. He did not hear that to delve deeply into the writings of myriad generations is to come to realize what that Self truly is. Without proper study, there are errors like these and there is self-deception like his. Because this was the way 'Meditation Master' Sōkō was, in his assembly there was not a single disciple, or even half a one, who had a trustworthy nose ring, but there were many who were pretend monks.[22] Failure to

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20. The phrase 'a hundred years from now' was a polite way of saying 'after you are dead', as it implies that the Master will surely live for another century.

21. The Great Doubt is "I could be wrong."

22. A nose ring is used in training a water buffalo. The term is often used in Zen contexts to refer to the practice of mastering self-control.

intuitively grasp what the Buddha Dharma is and failure to intellectually understand what the Buddha Dharma is are both just like this. Beyond any question, novice trainees here and now should explore the Matter in detail with their Master. Do not be negligent out of pride.

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> After Tandō's passing, Sōkō, in accord with Tandō's recommendation, went to train under Meditation Master Engo at Tennei Temple in the capital city. One day, upon Engo's entering the Dharma Hall, Sōkō reported to Engo that, thanks to Engo, he had had a spiritual awakening. Engo said, "Not yet. Even though a disciple's state may be like what you describe, nevertheless, you have still not clarified what the Great Dharma is."
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> On another day, whilst giving a Dharma talk, Engo quoted the words of the Venerable Abbot Goso Hōen on asserting existence and non-existence. Upon hearing this, Sōkō grasped a principle that brought him great comfort. Once again, he reported his understanding to Engo. Engo laughed and said, "It is not I who has deluded you!"

This is the story of how 'Meditation Master' Sōkō subsequently trained under Engo.

While in Engo's assembly, he served in the post of Abbot's Secretary, but there is no visible evidence of his attaining any understanding before or after that. Even when he was giving formal or informal talks, he offered nothing of what he had grasped. You need to know that his biographer speaks of his having had a spiritual awakening and records that he had grasped a principle that brought him great comfort, but there is nothing to support this.[23] Do not think of him as someone of prominence, for he was simply another person who was training under a Master.

Meditation Master Engo was an Old Buddha, as venerable as anyone within all ten quarters. Not since Ōbaku had there been one so worthy of veneration as Engo, for he was an Old Buddha who would be rare in any other world. Even so, ordinary folks and those in lofty positions who have recognized this are few, for the everyday world is a sad place indeed.

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23. That is, his biographer quotes what Sōkō said he had experienced, but he does not record Engo's responses.

Now when we examine Old Buddha Engo's giving voice to the Dharma and investigate Sōkō's Dharma talks, it is clear that the latter still did not have wise discernment that came up to that of his Master, nor did he have wise discernment that resembled that of his Master, and what is more, he never realized wise discernment that surpassed that of his Master even in his dreams. So, you need to recognize that 'Meditation Master' Sōkō did not have abilities that even equaled half those of his Master. He merely parroted lines from texts like the *Avatamsaka Scripture* and the *Shurangama Scripture*, but he never grasped what 'the Bones and Marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors' means. From Sōkō's point of view, he considered the Buddha Dharma to be merely the opinions supported by the greater and lesser hermits—those who are led by the spirit that permeates grasses and trees.[24] If this is what he imagined the Buddha Dharma to be, then clearly he did not know what the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors is. After Engo, he did not wander off to other temples or seek out good spiritual friends, but as head of a large temple, he functioned haphazardly as the monk who greets incoming novices.[25] The sayings he has left behind do not even approach the outskirts of the Great Dharma. At the same time, folks who do not recognize this are apt to think that it is not shameful to classify 'Meditation Master' Sōkō with the ancients, whereas those who see and know have decisively concluded that he was not enlightened. Ultimately, he had not clarified what the Great Dharma is and just irresponsibly babbled on.

Thus, you need to recognize that, in truth, Abbot Dōbi of Mount Tōzan had clearly made no mistake in what he saw in Sōkō's future. Folks who trained under 'Meditation Master' Sōkō ultimately became jealous and resentful of Abbot Dōbi, and have not stopped being so even to this very day. All Abbot Dōbi did was to refuse to acknowledge Sōkō's claim. Abbot Tandō's refusals to acknowledge Sōkō's claims were far stronger than Dōbi's, for he found fault with Sōkō every time he encountered him. Even so, Abbot Tandō is not resented by Sōkō's

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24. 'Hermits' in this context refer to those who have removed themselves from worldly ways of thinking. The greater hermits were those who resided among ordinary folks, practicing the Bodhisattva vows. The lesser hermits were those who resided in mountains and forests, practicing to acquire merit which they could then transfer to all sentient beings. 'The spirit that permeates grasses and trees' is an allusion to the Buddha Nature that is innate in all things that 'sprout up and grow tall'.

25. That is, despite his being nominal head of a large temple, he was unable to spiritually lead novices beyond the level of newcomers.

followers. Oh, how embarrassed we should feel for those who have been resentful in the past and are still so in the present!

In general, offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors in Great Sung China have been many, but trainees who have learned what Truth is have been few, so there are few who teach what is true. You should clearly recognize this principle in these stories. It was no different in Sōkō's Shaohsing era. The present is incomparably worse than that era. Today, folks who do not even know what the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors is have become the masters for novices.

You need to realize that the genuine passing on of the Record of Transmission in India and China by Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor is the genuine Transmission that has come down from Seigen's mountain. After it came down from Seigen's mountain, it was naturally Transmitted to Tōzan, which is something unknown to any but ourselves throughout all the ten quarters. Those who know this are all offspring of Tōzan and they bestow their fame upon their trainees. Still, throughout his life, 'Meditation Master' Sōkō did not understand what the phrases 'awakening to one's True Self' and 'realizing what that Self truly is' meant. How much less could he have penetrated his own spiritual question through his training! And even less, how can any present-day trainees who are descendants of Zen veteran Sōkō possibly understand the words 'awakening to one's True Self'?

Hence, the word 'self' and the word 'other' as used by the Buddhas and Ancestors refer to the Body and Mind of the Buddhas and Ancestors: they are the Eye of the Buddhas and Ancestors. And because they are the Bones and Marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors, they transcend what 'getting the skin' would mean to those of ordinary mind.

Delivered to the assembly in Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province on the twenty-ninth day of the second lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (April 8, 1244).

Copied by me whilst in the quarters of the Abbot's assistant at the foot of Kippō-ji Peak in Echizen Province on the twelfth day of the fourth lunar month of the same year (May 20, 1244).

Ejō

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On the Great Practice

(Daishugyō)

Translator's introduction: 'The Great Practice' refers to the training and practice of someone who is following the Greater Course and is functioning as a morally good spiritual friend and guide for others, a fully perfected Master who is doing the Great Practice. By contrast, 'a wild fox' refers to someone who gives false teaching.

This discourse is one of the more difficult ones to follow, in part because Dogen spends a considerable amount of time in refuting the many ways in which others have interpreted the story that he is commenting on. In addition, he calls into question the accuracy of various aspects of the story.

This particular story has been the center of much controversy. The core question is whether or not someone who has realized fully perfected enlightenment and is doing the Great Practice is freed from causality or is still subject to cause and effect. Dogen will ultimately argue that both views, though seemingly contradictory, are accurate. That is, someone who has realized fully perfected enlightenment is not subject to causality because such a person is living in total accord with the Precepts, and at the same time, such a person, as a sentient being, is subject to the causal consequences of being a sentient being.

Something that is not explicitly stated but is implied by Dogen's commentary is that the old man in the story may be one of Hyakujō's past lives, the karma from which Hyakujō cleanses by helping the old man turn his thinking around.

> Hyakujō Ekai was a Dharma heir of Baso. Whenever people came to hear him give a public Dharma talk, there was an old man who always came into the Dharma Hall immediately following those in the monastic assembly. He always listened to the Dharma talk and then, when the monks would leave the hall, he would leave at the same time. Then one day, he lingered behind. Thereupon, the Master asked him, "You who are standing here, who are you?"
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> The old man replied, "To speak truly, I am a non-human being. Long ago during the eon of Kashō Buddha,[1] I dwelt upon this mountain as Abbot. Then, one day, a trainee asked me, 'Is even the one who does the Great Practice still subject to cause and effect?' I

1. Among the Seven Buddhas, the One whose eon directly preceded that of Shakyamuni Buddha.

replied that such a one is no longer subject to cause and effect. After that, as a consequence, I was reduced to being reborn as a wild fox for five hundred lives. I now beseech you, O Venerable Monk, say something that will turn me around, for I long to rid myself of this wild fox's attitude of mind."

Thereupon, he asked the Master, "Is even someone who does the Great Practice subject to cause and effect?"

The Master replied, "Such a one is not blind to causality."

Upon hearing these words, the old man had a great awakening. Prostrating himself before the Master, he said, "Since I have already shed the outer trappings of a wild fox, I have taken to dwelling on the far side of this mountain. Dare I ask the Venerable Abbot to perform for me a monk's funeral service?"

The Master had the senior monk who supervises the Meditation Hall strike the wooden gong to signal the monks to assemble so that he might tell them that, after their meal, there would be a funeral service for a deceased monk. The whole assembly was at ease with this, though they wondered about it, since there was no sick person in the temple infirmary. After the meal, the Master simply led the assembly up to the base of a rock on the other side of the mountain, where they saw him use his traveling staff to point out the corpse of a wild fox. They cremated the remains in accordance with the appropriate procedure.

At nightfall, the Master went to the Dharma Hall where he gave the monks a talk on the preceding events. His Dharma heir Ōbaku then asked him, "In the past, the man said the wrong thing to turn his disciple around and, as a consequence, was reduced to being a wild fox for five hundred lives. Suppose he had not made this mistake, what would have become of him?"

The Master said, "Come up close and I will tell you."

Thereupon, Ōbaku went on up and gave the Master a slap. The Master clapped his hands and laughed, saying, "I've always thought that the beards of foreigners were red, and here is a red-bearded foreigner."

The spiritual question that is arising here in this story is precisely what the Great Practice is all about. Just as the old man had said, during the eon of Kashō Buddha there was an Abbot of Mount Hyakujō in Hungchou Province, and in the eon when Shakyamuni Buddha existed there was an Abbot of Mount Hyakujō in

Hungchou Province. These are key phrases in describing what has occurred. Although this is the case, the Abbot of Mount Hyakujō in the past during the eon of Kashō Buddha and the Abbot of Mount Hyakujō during the present eon of Shakyamuni Buddha are not one and the same person, nor are they different from each other, nor are they 'three and three before that, or three and three after that'.[2] The one who became the Abbot of Mount Hyakujō in the past did not become the Abbot of Mount Hyakujō later on, any more than the later Abbot of Mount Hyakujō was the preceding Abbot of Mount Hyakujō during the eon of Kashō Buddha. Even so, there is the old man's spiritual question of 'having dwelt upon this mountain as Abbot'. What he said for the benefit of his disciple is like what Hyakujō was now saying for the benefit of the old man. And the question that the disciple asked is like the question the old man was now asking. While setting forth one explanation, we cannot set forth a second, for if we let pass what is primary, we will get all involved with what is secondary.

The trainee in the long past is asking, "Is even 'that one' on Mount Hyakujō who is doing the Great Practice still subject to cause and effect?"[3] Truly, this question cannot be readily or easily grasped. And what is the reason for that? For the first time since the Buddha Dharma advanced eastwards during the Chinese Yung-p'ing era in the Later Han dynasty,[4] and since our Ancestral Master Bodhidharma came from the West during the Chinese P'u-t'ung era of the Liang dynasty, we are now able to hear the question of that trainee of the past due to what that old wild fox said. It is a condition that did not exist previously. So we can assert that it was rarely heard of.

When we search for, and find, the Great Practice, this will be the Great Cause and Effect. Because this Cause and Effect is invariably the full perfection of the cause and the complete fulfillment of the effect, there is nothing to debate concerning 'being subject to' or 'not being subject to', and there is nothing to discuss concerning 'being blind to' or 'not being blind to'. If 'not being subject to cause and effect' is a mistaken view, then 'not being blind to cause and effect' might also be a mistaken view. Even if we were to say that this is adding a mistake atop a mistake, still there was the old man's being reduced to the life of a wild fox and there was his dropping off of the life of a wild fox. It may appear reasonable

2. That is, instances of people fully realizing their Buddha Nature are beyond count, so awakened people can only see just so many around them, just so many having come before them, and just so many coming after them.

3. 'That one' refers to the enlightened Abbot of Mount Hyakujō in the long past.

4. This time period is concurrent with the introduction of Buddhist Scriptures into China.

that, even though 'not being subject to cause and effect' may have been a mistaken view in the past during the eon of Kashō Buddha, it may not be a mistaken view in the present during the eon of Shakyamuni Buddha. And it may also appear reasonable that, even though 'not being blind to cause and effect' during the present Shakyamuni Buddha's eon may have rid the old man of the attitude of a wild fox, it would not necessarily have done so during Kashō Buddha's eon.

In the old man's saying that he had been reduced to being reborn as a wild fox for five hundred lives, how, pray, did such a thing come about? There is no evidence that there was a wild fox who was enticing the earlier Abbot of Hyakujō and thereby causing him to be reduced to such a state, nor could there have been a former Abbot of Hyakujō who was a wild fox all along. It would be non-Buddhist to assert that the spirit of the former Abbot of Hyakujō came out and jumped into the skin bag* of a wild fox. And a wild fox could not have come along and swallowed up the former Abbot of Hyakujō. If we were to say that the former Abbot of Hyakujō had once more become a wild fox, he would have had to rid himself of the body of a former Abbot of Hyakujō, so that he could subsequently reduce himself to the state of a dead wild fox. An Abbot of Mount Hyakujō cannot turn himself into the body of a wild fox! How could 'cause and effect' possibly be like that? Cause and effect is not something inherent, nor is it something that someone initiates, nor is cause and effect something idly awaiting the action of some person.

Now, let's deal with the old man's response, "Such a one is no longer subject to cause and effect." Even though he was mistaken, he would not necessarily have been reduced to the state of a wild fox for that. If being reduced to the state of a wild fox was the inevitable consequence of answering a trainee's question inaccurately, then how many thousands of myriad times would the Rinzais and Tokusans of more recent times, along with their disciples, have been reduced to being wild foxes as a consequence? And apart from them, senior monks who have made mistakes over the past two or three hundred years would certainly have become innumerable foxes. Yet, we have not heard of their having been reduced to being wild foxes as a consequence. If there had been many, then there would have been more than enough for us to encounter or hear about them. Even though you might well say that they have not made such a serious mistake, there are many indeed who have given even more dubious responses than "Such a one is not subject to cause and effect." And there have been many monks whom we cannot place even on the outskirts of the Buddha Dharma. You need to spot them

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* See *Glossary.*

by using the Eye of your training and practice, for if your Eye is not yet functioning, you may well not be able to discern them. So, you need to know that we cannot assert that someone who answers badly turns himself into a wild fox, whereas someone who answers well is not reduced to being a wild fox. In this story, it does not say what it is like after someone has rid himself of the attitude of a wild fox, but no doubt it will be that of a real gem of a trainee doing his best within a bag of skin.

As a rule, those who have never encountered or heard about the Buddha Dharma say, "After he had completely rid himself of the wild fox, he returned to the ocean of his Original Nature. Even though he was reduced to being a wild fox for a while due to his delusion, after he had had a great awakening, he shed being a wild fox and returned to his Original Nature." They mean by this that he returned to some innate, unchanging self which non-Buddhists speak of. Furthermore, this is not the Buddha Dharma. If they were to say that a wild fox is devoid of Original Nature or that a wild fox has no innate enlightenment, such would not be the Buddha Dharma. Were they to say, "When a person has a great awakening, such a one has let go of the mental attitude of a wild fox and has rid himself of it," then it would not have been the wild fox's great enlightenment, and being a wild fox would have served no purpose. So, do not assert such things.

You need to be clear about the point that the wild fox, which the former Abbot of Hyakujō had been for five hundred lives, forthwith dropped off being a wild fox by virtue of the triggering words concerning causality spoken by the later Abbot of Hyakujō. If you were to say, "When someone who was a bystander spoke a triggering phrase concerning causality, that freed another from the mind of a wild fox," well, the great earth with its mountains and rivers has already been giving forth innumerable triggering expressions concerning causality and is continually doing so. But even so, the old man had not yet dropped off the mind of a wild fox in the past, and he only dropped it off due to the later Abbot's triggering words concerning causality. This was the old man's killing off his doubt. If you were to say that the great earth with its mountains and rivers has never yet given expression to the triggering words concerning causality, then the later Hyakujō ultimately might not have been able to open his mouth.

Further, there are many old worthies who have contended that saying 'not being subject to' and 'not being blind to' are essentially the same, but they have not yet directly experienced how 'not being subject to' and 'not being blind to' are related. Consequently, they have not explored through their training the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of falling into the body of a wild fox, nor have they explored through their training the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow of dropping off the mind of a wild fox. If you don't get the beginning right, you'll never get the end right. In

the old man's remark, "I was reduced to being reborn as a wild fox for five hundred lives," what is it that was reborn and what was that reduced to? At the very moment when he was reborn as a wild fox, what form did his previous universe now take on? How is the phrase 'not being subject to causality' related to his being reborn five hundred times? And where did the pelt that was now lying beneath a rock on the other side of the mountain come from? He was reborn as a wild fox for giving another the phrase 'not subject to causality' and he dropped off the mind of a wild fox upon hearing the words 'not being blind to causality'. Even though there was a 'being reduced to' and a 'dropping off of', they were still the causal consequences of his being a wild fox.

At the same time, some of old have said, "Because the old man answered, 'Not subject to causality', he seemed to be denying causality." This assertion is beside the point and is something that people who are in the dark say about causality. Even if there had once been a former Abbot of Hyakujō who said that he was not subject to being a wild fox, he could not possibly deceive someone of the Great Practice, since such a one will not deny causality. On the other hand, there are those who say, "Not being blind to cause and effect means not being blind to causality, and because the Great Practice is transcendent Cause and Effect, such a trainee has dropped off the mind of a wild fox." This is truly eighty or ninety percent of the Eye for exploring the Matter.*[5] Be that as it may, the old man might well have said in verse:

In the eon of Kashō Buddha
I dwelt on this mountain,
In the eon of Shakyamuni Buddha
I dwell there now.

My former self and my present self,
Face of Sun and face of Moon,
Intercept the wild fox's ghost
And reveal the wild fox's spirit.

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How could a wild fox have possibly known of its five hundred lives? If you say that it knew of its five hundred lives by using the wiles of a wild fox, well, the

5. This is Dogen's way of confirming the validity of someone's statement. Such statements are described as being eighty or ninety percent, which means that there are still other ways of saying exactly the same thing, since there is no single, absolute way of stating the Truth.

wiles of a wild fox did not yet fully know the whole of the wild fox's life, and its whole life had not yet been stuffed into a wild fox's hide. The wild fox certainly knew that he had been reduced to being reborn for five hundred lives, because those lives were the manifesting of his spiritual question. But it did not fully know the whole of its life: there is that which it knew and that which it did not know. Unless what it knew arose and departed simultaneously with its body, it could not have calculated what 'five hundred lives' was. Since it could not make such a calculation, the words 'five hundred lives' must be a fabrication. Were you to say that the wild fox knew it by using information other than what the wild fox knew directly, then it would not have been something that the wild fox personally knew to be so. But over the generations, who could have known this on the wild fox's behalf? Without having any clear path through what we know and what we don't know, we cannot say that the old man was reduced to being a wild fox. If he was not reduced to being a wild fox, there could not be any dropping off of the mind of a wild fox. If there were neither a 'being reduced to' nor a 'dropping off of', there could not have been a former Hyakujō, and if there were no former Hyakujō, there could not be a later Hyakujō. Do not treat this lightly, for it needs careful study. Grasping this underlying principle, you need to see through and expose the mistaken opinions which have been voiced over and over again throughout the Liang, Chen, Sui, T'ang, and Sung Dynasties.

To return to the story, the old non-human being said to the later Hyakujō, "Dare I ask the Venerable Abbot to perform for me a monk's funeral service?" He should not have spoken like this. Since Hyakujō's time, a number of virtuous spiritual friends and guides have had no doubt about these words nor have they been surprised by them. But the main point is this: how could a dead fox become a dead monk, since it has never taken the Precepts, or attended a summer retreat, or kept to the everyday behavior of a monk, or held to the principles of a monk? If such a creature may arbitrarily undergo the funeral ceremony for a dead monk, then any dead person who has never left home life behind would have to be accorded the funeral rites of a dead monk too. If there were any male or female lay Buddhists who had requested it upon their demise, they, like the dead wild fox, would have to be accorded the funeral rites of a dead monk. When we look for an example of someone being accorded these rites, there is none, nor do we hear of one. Such a rite has never been Transmitted in Buddhism. Even if we thought we should do it, it should not be done.

Now there is the statement that Hyakujō cremated the remains in accordance with the appropriate procedure. This is not clear. Perhaps it is a mistake. You need to keep in mind that all the funeral rites for a dead monk are prescribed, from our efforts upon entering his sick room to our practicing the Way upon reaching the

burial garden—nothing is done arbitrarily. Even though the former Hyakujō referred to himself as a dead fox at the base of a rock, how could this possibly be the usual way great monks behave? How could it have been the bones and marrow of an Ancestor of the Buddha? Who is there to prove that it was the former Hyakujō? Do not treat with arrogance the Dharma standards of the Buddhas and Ancestors by vainly taking as real the transformations of the spirit of some wild fox. As offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors, you should treat with importance the Dharma standards of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Never leave matters up to what others request, as Hyakujō did. It is hard enough encountering the One Great Matter and the whole of the Dharma. Do not be hauled about by worldly desires or dragged hither and yon by human sentimentality.

As for here in our nation of Japan, it has been difficult to encounter the standards of the Buddhas and Ancestors or even to hear of them. Nowadays, hearing about them or encountering them is rare indeed, so we should prize them more deeply than the jewel that the king of old took from his topknot.[6] Those who lack our good fortune have hearts that are irreverent and shallow in their trust. Sad to say, this is due to their never having known what is or is not important in their affairs. They lack the wise discernment of the past five hundred years or so. Be that as it may, we should be industrious with ourselves and should help others go forward. If you receive the genuine Transmission of even one prostration or one meditation period from an Ancestor of the Buddha, you will feel such joy at having encountered that which is difficult to encounter. Folks lacking this attitude of mind will not be able to obtain any merit or even a single benefit, though they may have encountered a thousand Buddhas after having left home life behind. They will simply be non-Buddhists who have vainly latched onto the Buddha Dharma. Although they may claim to be learning the Buddha Dharma, they cannot genuinely expound the Buddha Dharma in their own words.

So, if someone who has not yet become a monk—even if it were a ruler of a nation or one of his ministers, even if it were Brahma or Indra—comes and requests that you perform the funeral rites of a deceased monk for his sake, do not permit it. Tell him that he should come back after he has left home life behind, accepted the Precepts, and become a full monk. Those in the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form who so crave rewards for their deeds that they do not seek

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6. An allusion to a passage in the "Conduct That Eases the Way" chapter of the *Lotus Scripture,* in which a king bestows upon his servant the Jewel of the Dharma. One translation of this can be found in *Buddhist Writings on Meditation and Daily Practice,* (Shasta Abbey Press, 1994), pp. 18-20.

after the venerable status of the Triple Treasure of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, may come bringing you a thousand corpses to bury as monks, thereby seeking to defile and act contrary to the funeral rites for deceased monks, but such an action on their part would merely be a serious transgression. It would certainly not produce any merit. If they wish to form good links to the merits of the Buddha Dharma, then, in accord with the Buddha's Teaching, they will need to be quick to leave home life behind, to accept the Precepts, and thereby to become full monks.

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At nightfall, the Master went to the Dharma Hall where he gave a talk on the preceding events.

The underlying principle of this account is extremely dubious. Just what is it getting at? Hyakujō seems to be saying that the old man had already brought five hundred lives to an end and had now rid himself of his former body as a fox. Are the five hundred lives that are being spoken of here to be reckoned as they would be in the world of humans, or should they be counted as a wild fox would experience them, or are they to be counted as a Buddha would refer to them? And what is more, how could the eyes of an old wild fox possibly have caught sight of what a Hyakujō is? Those who have been spotted by a wild fox must have the spirit of a wild fox; those who have been spotted by a Hyakujō are Ancestors of the Buddha. This is why Meditation Master Koboku Hōjō composed the following verse:

Hyakujō once had a face-to-face encounter with a wild fox
Who sought instruction from him because the Master was one with a tough-talking mind.
So now I dare ask each of you trainees,
"Have you also spit out all of your fox drivel?"

So, the wild fox was the Eye with which Hyakujō had his face-to-face encounter. Even if you spit out half your fox drivel, it will be your sticking out your long, broad tongue to say a word that will transform others.[7] At the very moment when you do this, you will get free of the body of a wild fox, free of the body of a Hyakujō, free of the body of an old, non-human being, and free of the body of the whole universe.

7. A long, broad tongue is one of the thirty-two distinguishing marks of a Buddha.

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> Ōbaku then asked Hyakujō, "In the past, the man said the wrong thing to turn his disciple around and, as a consequence, was reduced to being a wild fox for five hundred lives. Suppose he had not made this mistake, what would have become of him?"

Now, this question is a manifestation of what Buddhas and Ancestors ask. Among the venerable senior monks in the lineage of Nangaku, there is none like Ōbaku, either before or after him. At the same time, the old man never said that his response to his disciple was inaccurate, nor did Hyakujō ever say that the old man's response was inaccurate. So, why did Ōbaku arbitrarily say that the old man gave the wrong response which produced this transformation? If Ōbaku is asserting that Hyakujō is saying that it all depends on what the mistake is, then Ōbaku has not yet been able to grasp Hyakujō's greater intent. It would be as if Ōbaku had not thoroughly explored not only responses that are wrong but also responses that go beyond being right or wrong, which are what the Buddhas and Ancestors articulate. You need to learn through your explorations with your Master that in this particular story neither the former Hyakujō nor the later Hyakujō said that it was an inaccurate response.

Rather, by using five hundred wild fox pelts, each three inches thick, he kept dwelling on this mountain, speaking for the sake of his disciples. In that the stubble of a wild fox's coat had fallen away, the later Hyakujō had the stinking skin bag of a human being, which, when we take the measure of it, is half a wild fox's skin striving to get free. There is the former Hyakujō's being reduced to a certain mental state and there is the later Hyakujō's getting free of it. And also, there is the cause and effect that comes about through a Master's words turning things around for others, and doing so without making a mistake. Beyond question, these are the Great Practice.

Were Ōbaku to come here now and ask, "Suppose he had not made a mistake and was able to turn things around for his disciple, what would have become of him?" I would reply, "He would still have been reduced to being reborn as a wild fox." If Ōbaku were then to ask, "Why so?" I would reply, "O you embodiment of a wild fox's ghost!" And even then, it would not be a matter of Ōbaku having made a mistake or not having made a mistake. Do not concede that Ōbaku's question is the correct one to ask. And also, when Ōbaku asked, "What would have become of him?" I could answer, "Are <u>you</u> able to grope about for <u>your</u> hide and face yet?" And also, I could say, "Have <u>you</u> been reduced to being reborn as a wild fox yet?" And also, I could say, "Would you have replied to that disciple that <u>you</u> are not subject to cause and effect?"

However, Hyakujō's saying, "Come up close and I will tell you," already embraces the issue of what would have become of him. Ōbaku came up, dead to the past and oblivious to the future.[8] His giving Hyakujō a slap is his doing a bit of foxy transformation.

> The Master clapped his hands and laughed, saying, "I've always thought that the beards of foreigners were red, and behold, here is a red-bearded foreigner."[9]

This way of putting It does not capture the spirit one hundred percent, but is, in effect, a mere eighty or ninety percent of it. Even if we were to concede that it was eighty or ninety percent of it, it would still not be eighty or ninety percent accurate. And even if we were to concede that it was a hundred percent accurate, still it is something that is not eighty or ninety percent accurate.[10] Though this is the way things are, I would express it as follows:

What Hyakujō said permeates the whole universe.
And even so, he had not yet left the wild fox's den.
Ōbaku's feet were on solid ground,
And even so, he still seems attached to the mantis's way.[11]
With a slap on the face and a clap of the hands there is the one of them, not the two of them:
The beards of foreigners are red, and a red-bearded one is a foreigner.

Delivered to the assembly at the old temple of Kippō-ji in Echizen Province on the ninth day of the third lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (April 17, 1244).

Copied by me in the quarters of the Abbot's assistant in the same temple on the thirteenth day of the third lunar month of the same year (April 21, 1244).

Ejō

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8. That is, Ōbaku had dropped off everything and was living fully in each moment.
9. That is, 'the beards of foreigners are red' and 'there are red-bearded foreigners' are two ways of saying the same thing.
10. That is, even if a way of putting the Matter is right on target one hundred percent, it is not the only way of putting the Matter, and hence is less than one hundred percent, or even eighty or ninety percent.
11. That is, Ōbaku has his feet on the ground, but he still tended to be cautious—like the movements of a praying mantis preparing to strike—as if fearful of making a mistake.

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On Conferring the Face-to-Face Transmission

(Menju)

Translator's Introduction: This discourse is divided into three parts, the first two having their own postscripts. This suggests that Dōgen added material later based on questions from his disciples that he felt needed further clarification, particularly concerning the ways in which doing one's training, having a kenshō (that is, the experience of one's Buddha Nature), being Transmitted, and being certified as a Dharma heir interrelate.

In addition, there is a seeming contradiction in this discourse which may perplex some readers. Early on, where Dōgen describes how the Face-to-Face Transmission had been passed on through the generations from Shakyamuni Buddha down to Dōgen himself, he seems to imply that the Transmission can only occur between a disciple and his or her Master while the Master is still alive. Later, he cites several cases where there is a claim of monks' having been transmitted in some sense, but not physically face-to-face with the one who was his Master. However, as Dōgen makes clear towards the end of the discourse, the bottom line is that whatever someone may feel has been either a kenshō or a Face-to-Face Transmission, the experience must be confirmed by a living Master, either the monk's own or another's.

At the time when Shakyamuni Buddha was with His assembly atop the Divine Vulture Peak in India, and while amidst the millions gathered there, He plucked an udumbara flower and held it aloft, His eyes atwinkle. At that moment, the countenance of the Venerable Makakashō broke out into a smile. Shakyamuni Buddha said, "Since I too possess the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, I have conferred It upon Makakashō."

This is the very principle of Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor conferring the Face-to-Face Transmission of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. Having been genuinely Transmitted by the Seven Buddhas,* It came down to the Venerable Makakashō. Through twenty-eight Transmissions from the Venerable Makakashō, it came down to the Venerable Bodhidharma. The Venerable Bodhidharma himself came to China and gave the Face-to-Face Transmission to the Venerable Eka, who is a Great Ancestor of our

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* See *Glossary.*

authentic tradition and a Fully Enlightened Great Master. Through five more Transmissions, It came down to Great Master Daikan Enō of Mount Sōkei. Through seventeen more conferrings, It came down to my late Master, the Old Buddha Tendō Nyojō of Mount Tendō in Keigen Prefecture in Great Sung China. On the first day of the fifth lunar month in the first year of the Pao-ch'ing era in Great Sung China (June 8, 1225), I, Dōgen, offered incense in the Abbot's quarters and bowed in respect to my Master, the Old Buddha of Tendō, who is now deceased. This Old Buddha who was my former Master met me for the first time. At that time, he led me by the hand through the Teaching and gave me the Face-to-Face Transmission, saying:

> I have revealed to you the Dharma Gate of the Face-to-Face Transmission which Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor has conferred. This is the holding aloft of the flower on the Divine Vulture Peak. It is Eka on Mount Sūzan realizing Bodhidharma's Marrow. It is Daiman Kōnin's Transmitting the robe. It is Tōzan's conferring the Face-to-Face Transmission. These are the Buddha's Ancestors conferring the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching through a Face-to-Face Transmission. It exists only within our monastic family and is something that others have not yet encountered even in their dreams.

When it comes to the principle underlying this conferring of the Face-to-Face Transmission, because Kashō Buddha personally gave the Face-to-Face Transmission to Shakyamuni Buddha when He was in that Buddha's assembly, and because Shakyamuni safeguarded It, It is the very face of an Ancestor of the Buddha. Had there been no Face-to-Face Transmission from the face of the Buddha, there would not have been all the various subsequent Buddhas. It is intimately connected with Shakyamuni Buddha's personal encounter with the Venerable Makakashō. Although Ananda was His cousin and Rahula was His son, neither attained the intimate connection with Him that Makakashō had. Even though there were various great bodhisattvas* in His assembly, none attained the intimate connection with Him that Makakashō had, nor could they sit in the Venerable Makakashō's seat. That the World-honored One and Makakashō arrived at sitting in the same seat and wearing the same kesa* is taken to be the behavior of Buddhas of one and the same generation. The Venerable Makakashō had personally received the Face-to-Face Transmission of the World-honored One. This was the conferring of His Face, the conferring of His Mind, the conferring of His Body, the conferring of His Eye. Makakashō made alms offerings in veneration and prostrations in homage to Shakyamuni Buddha. Who knows how many

thousands of myriad transformations He had been through, breaking His bones and shattering His body to bits in His efforts? His own Countenance is beyond face and eyes, for He had been given the Face and Eyes of a Tathagata for a countenance. Shakyamuni Buddha looked directly at the Venerable Makakashō, and the Venerable Makakashō looked directly at the Venerable Ananda, and the Venerable Ananda personally bowed in respect to the Buddha Countenance of the Venerable Makakashō, for this was his Face-to-Face Transmission. The Venerable Ananda resided in, and kept to, this Face-to-Face Transmission, and, having connected with Shōnawashu, gave him the Face-to-Face Transmission. The Venerable Shōnawashu, while directly attending on the Venerable Ananda out of respect, experienced the Face on his own, together with all Faces, as the conferring of the Face-to-Face Transmission and the accepting of the Face-to-Face Transmission.

In this way, Ancestral Masters, as successive heirs for generation after generation, have passed on the Face-to-Face Transmission. This was done in accord with a disciple being 'seen' by a Master and the Master 'recognizing' the disciple.[1] If even one Ancestor, or one Master, or one disciple had failed to confer the Face-to-Face Transmission, there would not be Buddha after Buddha or Ancestor after Ancestor. For instance, by letting the waters of many rivers gather and irrigate the roots, They have caused the branches of our tradition to grow long. And by Their keeping the Light going, Its brightness has been made constant. And by Their having done so in millions of billions of ways, the trunk and its branches are one and the same. And there have also been swift and nimble moments as mother hen and chick, the one without and the other within, cheep and peck the eggshell open. As a consequence, keeping true to Shakyamuni Buddha as though He were right before Them, They have let the days and nights throughout Their life pile up, and letting Themselves be illumined by the countenance of the Buddha, They have let the days and nights of Their whole life accumulate. We do not know for how many eons beyond measure this has gone on. Just quietly thinking about this should fill us with heartfelt gratitude.

By bowing down in respect to the Face of Shakyamuni Buddha and by transferring the Eye of Shakyamuni Buddha to our own eyes, we will have transferred our eyes to the Eye of Buddha. Ours will be the very Eye and Face of Buddha. Without even one generation's break, that which has been conferred face-to-face right up to the present by the mutual Transmission of this Buddha Eye and

1. That is, the person occupying the position of Master sees that the one occupying the position of disciple appears as 'a vessel for the Dharma' and is therefore 'such a person', one suitable for Transmission.

Buddha Face is this very Face-to-Face Transmission. These successive heirs over some dozens of generations are instances of face after face being the Face of Buddha, for they have received the Face-to-Face Transmission from the original Buddha Face. Their bowing down in respect to this conferring of the Face as the genuine Transmission is their respectful bowing down to the Seven Buddhas, including Shakyamuni Buddha, and it is their bowing in respect and making venerative offerings to the twenty-eight Indian Ancestors of the Buddha from Makakashō on down. This is what the Face and Eye of an Ancestor of the Buddha is like. To encounter this Ancestor of the Buddha is to meet Shakyamuni Buddha along with the other Seven Buddhas. It is the very instant when an Ancestor of the Buddha personally confers the Face-to-Face Transmission upon himself: it is a Buddha of the Face-to-Face Transmission conferring the Face-to-Face Transmission upon a Buddha of the Face-to-Face Transmission. Using that which entwines like the vines of kudzu and wisteria, He confers the Face-to-Face Transmission as an entwining, without any disruption. Opening his Eye, he confers the Eye-to-Eye Transmission and receives the Eye-to-Eye Transmission. Revealing his Face, he confers the Face-to-Face Transmission and receives the Face-to-Face Transmission. The conferring of the Face-to-Face Transmission is both receiving and giving from the place of the Face. When it comes to explaining Mind, He confers the Mind-to-Mind Transmission by means of Mind. When it comes to manifesting Body, He confers the Body-to-Body Transmission by means of Body. In other places and in other nations, such a one as this is treated as the Original Ancestor. In China and eastwards, the conferring and receiving of the Face-to-Face Transmission exists only in our monastic family of the Buddha's authentic Transmission. Moreover, it is the mutual passing on of the Genuine Eye with which we see the Tathagata.

When I bow in respect to the Face of Shakyamuni Buddha, I, as one in the fifty-first generation, do not stand side-by-side with the Seven Buddhas and the Ancestors of our tradition, nor do I stand in a line with Them; rather, a conferring of the Face-to-Face Transmission takes place with all of us at the same moment. If someone does not encounter a Master even once in a lifetime, that person is not a disciple: if someone does not encounter a disciple, that person is not a Master. When they have finally met each other and recognized each other, and when the conferring of the Face-to-Face Transmission and the passing on of the Dharma to the successor have taken place, that is the manifesting of what is called the conferring of the Face-to-Face Transmission in our Ancestral tradition. This is why their faces have taken on the radiance associated with that of the Tathagata. Accordingly, no matter how many thousands or tens of thousands of years or how many hundreds or millions of eons may pass, this conferring of the Face-to-Face

Transmission is what is meant by Shakyamuni Buddha's conferring the Face-to-Face Transmission right here and now before our very eyes.

When this state of manifesting as an Ancestor of the Buddha in the here-and-now has been realized, it is a transformation of the World-honored One, of Makakashō, of the fifty-one generations, and of the seven founding Ancestors of our tradition, all of which is done for the sake of helping sentient beings. It is the Light manifesting before our very eyes, and it is Body manifesting before our very eyes, and it is Mind manifesting before our very eyes, and it is what comes from the ends of our toes to the tip of our nose. Even though not a single word has been grasped nor half a sentence understood, yet the Master has already seen the back of the disciple's head, for the disciple has already bowed his head in respect to the Master: this is a conferring of the Face-to-Face Transmission, which is the genuine Transmission. We should deeply respect a conferring of the Face-to-Face Transmission done in this manner. Merely leaving traces of one's mind on the mind field of another is hardly a greatly respected or valuable way to live. The changing of one's countenance or the turning of one's head whilst the Face-to-Face Transmission is being conferred may be a matter of the skin of one's Face being three inches thick or the skin of one's Face been ten feet thin. And this very skin of one's Face may well be the Great Round Mirror of the Buddhas. Because the Great Round Mirror is taken to be the skin of the Face, neither inside nor outside have any flaws, nor is the Face blurred over. And Great Round Mirrors have customarily conferred the Face-to-Face Transmission to Great Round Mirrors.

Those who have truly had Transmitted to them the Eye of the True Dharma with which they personally see a Shakyamuni Buddha appearing before them will have a more intimate connection with that Dharma than with Shakyamuni Buddha Himself. Sharp of eye, they will see innumerable Shakyamuni Buddhas appearing, lined up both in front of them and behind them. Accordingly, those who esteem Shakyamuni Buddha, who have lost their heart to Shakyamuni Buddha, should esteem and revere this genuine Face-to-Face Transmission and should bow down in deepest respect to that which is hard to come by, hard to encounter. It is their bowing down in reverence to the Tathagata: it is their having the Face-to-Face Transmission conferred on them by the Tathagata. Moreover, when those who are reverently exploring the True Transmission through their training are fortunate enough to encounter the Tathagata who is conveying the Face-to-Face Transmission, they will be loath to be apart from this Self and will protect and keep to It, whether the Tathagata is the Self that they think of as their own True Self or as the Self of another.

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In speaking of the Genuine Transmission in our monastic family, those who bow in respect to the eight stupas* are delivered from hindrances resulting from their wrongdoings and come to realize the fruition of the Way.[2] These stupas mark the route that Shakyamuni Buddha took in His life. They were erected at such places as where He was born, where He first turned the Wheel of the Dharma, where He realized the Way, and where He entered nirvana. Another reliquary remains at Kanyakubja and one was kept in Ambapāli Grove. Yet another became the Great Earth while the eighth became the vast Great Sky. And by our doing reverential bows to whatever has been treated as a stupa—based on some sound, smell, taste, touch, substance, palpable form, or the like—the fruition of the Way manifests before our very eyes. Reverentially bowing at these eight stupas is a diligent practice throughout India, and householders as well as monks, crowds of those of lofty position as well as crowds of ordinary people, vie to make reverential bows and venerative alms offerings. This is a veritable scroll of Scripture: it is just the way it is in Buddhist Scriptures. And what is more, by Shakyamuni Buddha's using thirty-seven methods as His training and practice,[3] and thereby bringing the Way to Its fruition in every moment of His life, the ever-present traces of His practice and discipline can be seen scattered about here and there along the pathways of old. And because He made these traces plain enough to see, we can realize the Way.

Keep in mind that the frosts and flowers have returned ever so many times to these multi-storied eight stupas. The winds and rain, time and again, have encroached upon them, yet they have put their mark in space and they have put their mark in form.[4] The spiritual benefits which they lavish upon people of the present day have not diminished. And when we now attempt to make the roots, strengths, realizations, and paths of these thirty-seven methods into our training and practice, even though defiling passions exist along with the hindrances created by our delusions, nevertheless, as we train and experience an awakening, the power of these methods will still be like new today.

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2. The eight stupas are the places where Shakyamuni's ashes, which were divided into eight parts, are said to have been enshrined.

3. Dōgen discussed these methods in detail in Discourse 70: On the Thirty-seven Methods of Training for Realizing Enlightenment (*Sanjushichihon Bodai Bumpo*).

4. That is, despite erosion from wind and rain over time, enough remains of them that they can still be seen towering into the sky, and their form as stupas is still recognizable.

The spiritually beneficial activity of Shakyamuni Buddha was no different. What is more, the present conferring of the Face-to-Face Transmission today should not be compared with those stupas and methods. The thirty-seven ancillary methods for realizing enlightenment have as their source the Buddha Face, the Buddha Mind, the Buddha Body, the Buddha Speech, the Buddha Brightness, the Buddha Tongue, and so on. The mass of meritorious virtues of those eight stupas also have as their foundation the Buddha Face, and so forth. Now, when we, as fellow explorers of Buddhahood, conduct ourselves day-by-day in accord with the Absolute Path to liberation, we should, in the calmness and tranquility of our days and nights, make the effort to consider these matters deeply, and should take pleasure in, and cherish, the opportunity to do so.[5]

The 'Country' we call ours surpasses all others for our Way alone is unsurpassed. In other places, there are many who are not like us. I speak of our Country and our Way as being unsurpassed and solely held in veneration because, even though the multitudes who had assembled on the Divine Vulture Peak went forth and instructed others throughout the ten directions, only Bodhidharma, the authentic successor at Shōrin-ji Temple, was truly the religious head in China, and the descendants of Daikan Enō of Mount Sōkei have passed on the Face-to-Face Transmission right up to the present day. Today is a good time for the Buddha Dharma to once again 'be taken into the mud and into the water'.[6] If you have not realized a genuine fruition by this time, at what time will you realize a genuine fruition? If you have not cut off your delusions by this time, at what time will you cut them off? Should you not have become Buddha by this time, at what time will you become Buddha? Should you not be sitting as a Buddha at this time, at what time will you practice being a Buddha? Do your utmost to examine this in detail.

When Shakyamuni Buddha graciously conferred the Face-to-Face Transmission upon the Venerable Makakashō, He said, "Since I possess the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching and the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, I have conferred them upon Makakashō." While in the assembly on Mount Sūzan, the Venerable Bodhidharma pointed directly to the Second Ancestor and said, "You have realized what my Marrow is."

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5. 'The Absolute Path' is a translation of a Buddhist technical term for the spiritual path of training that not only takes us to the point of realizing our True Nature but also takes us through the remainder of our life.

6. 'To be taken into the mud and into the water' is a common Zen Buddhist metaphor for going to whatever lengths are necessary to help sentient beings realize the Truth.

Be very clear about it: when someone Transmits face-to-face the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching by saying, "You have realized what my Marrow is," this is plainly an instance of conferring the Face-to-Face Transmission. At that very moment when you let go of your everyday notions of what 'bones and marrow' means, there will be the Face-to-Face Transmission of the Buddhas and Ancestors. The Face-to-Face Transmission of the great Full Enlightenment and the Mind seal* will involve a particular moment in a definite place. Even though it may not be the Transmission of everything, do not probe into your training with the assumption that something is still lacking.

In summary, the Great Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors is simply one face conferring and one face accepting, the accepting of the Face and the conferring of the Face, and further, there will be nothing in excess and nothing lacking. We should take the opportunity to delight in, and have confidence in, the countenance of someone who has encountered this Face-to-Face Transmission, proffering our services to that person.

On the first day of the fifth lunar month of the Pao-ch'ing era in Great Sung China (June 8, 1225), I, Dōgen, for the first time bowed in deepest respect to my late Master Tendō, the Old Buddha, who conferred on me the Face-to-Face Transmission. I was then permitted to enter his private chambers. I had barely dropped off body and mind before returning to Japan and, since then, I have maintained and relied upon this Face-to-Face Transmission.

Given to the assembly in the training hall of Kippō-ji Temple in Yoshida Prefecture, Echizen Province, on the twentieth day of the tenth lunar month in the first year of the Kangen era (December 3, 1243).

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Among those people who have never encountered or heard about, or explored through their training with a Master the principle that the Face-to-Face Transmission of the Way of the Buddha is like this, there was one called Meditation Master Jōko of Sempuku-ji Temple, who was alive during the Chinese Ching-yü era (1034-1037) in the reign of the great Sung emperor Jen-chung.[7] Upon entering the Lecture Hall, he said the following:

7. Sempuku Jōko (dates unknown) resided near the stupa of Meditation Master Ummon Bun'en (864-949). Though already a Meditation Master, Jōko, upon reading the recorded sayings of Ummon, felt he had finally fully awakened and consequently claimed that he was Ummon's Dharma heir.

The Great Master Ummon Bun'en is actually present here right now. Do all of you also see him? If you are able to see him, then you are a fellow trainee, one who is the equal of this mountain monk. Do you see him? Do you see him! You need to pierce directly to the bottom of this matter, then, straight off, you will realize what is true and right, and will no longer be able to delude yourselves.

Let us consider for the moment the case of Ōbaku of olden days. Upon hearing his Master, the monk Hyakujō, relate the story of his own Master, Great Master Baso, giving forth with a sudden shout to startle and awaken his disciples, Ōbaku appeared to have entered a state of deep reflection, so Hyakujō asked him, "From now on, don't you wish to be an heir of the Great Master?" Ōbaku replied, "Although I know of the Great Master, to put it simply, I did not meet the Great Master. I dare say I would gladly forfeit having descendants of my own, if only I could have heard the Great Master name me as his heir."

O members of this great assembly here, not five years had gone by since Great Master Baso had passed on, yet Ōbaku said of himself that he had never met the Great Master. You should by all means realize that Ōbaku's viewpoint had not fully matured; in short, he still possessed only one eye.

This mountain monk is not like that. I have not only been able to know about Great Master Ummon, I have been able to see Great Master Ummon, and safe to say, I have heard Great Master Ummon name me as an heir of his. Yet given that it is already a hundred or more years since Ummon entered nirvana, how can I possibly make the assertion that the two of us had an intimate encounter? Safe to say, those who are sophisticated in the ways of the world and those who can see beyond surface appearances will attest to my having the radiance of direct experience, whereas those who are cynical or small-minded will give rise in their minds to doubts and criticisms. Those who have been able to see do not talk about it, and those who have not yet seen, should they not look right now? Since you have been standing here for some time without asking any questions, I now wish that you may take good care of yourselves.[8]

8. This statement is a typical way in which a Zen Master might bring a meeting of the assembly to an end.

Now Jōko, even if you had known all about Great Master Ummon and had seen Great Master Ummon, has Great Master Ummon seen you? If Great Master Ummon has not met you, it would not be possible for you to hear Great Master Ummon name you as an heir of his. Because Great Master Ummon has not yet certified you, even you yourself dare not assert, "Great Master Ummon has met me." It is obvious that you and Great Master Ummon have never met each other. Among the Seven Buddhas, along with all the other Buddhas of the past, present, and future, is there any Ancestor of the Buddhas who has been heir to the Dharma without Master and disciple having met each other?

Jōko, do not assert that Ōbaku's viewpoint had not fully matured. How can you possibly gauge Ōbaku's daily behavior or fathom Ōbaku's words and phrases? Ōbaku was an Old Buddha. His exploration of inheriting the Dharma was thorough. You have not even seen, or heard, or dreamt of, much less studied through your training what the principle of being heir to the Dharma is. Ōbaku inherited the Dharma from his Master, and he held to and relied upon our Ancestor Baso. Ōbaku had an audience with his Master and saw his Master. You, Jōko, have not seen the Master, nor have you known the Ancestor, nor did you know your Self, much less have you met your Self. There is no Master who met you, nor have you ever experienced the Eye of a Master being opened. The truth of the matter is that you are the one whose viewpoint has not matured: it is your inheritance of the Dharma that is not complete.

Didn't you know in what sense Great Master Ummon really is a Dharma descendant of Ōbaku?[9] How could you possibly sound the depths of what Hyakujō and Ōbaku were talking about? You still haven't fathomed what Great Master Ummon was talking about. Those who have explored through their training with a Master what Hyakujō and Ōbaku were talking about will pick up on it; those who have reached the place where everything has dropped off, which is what is being directly pointed to here, will be able to fathom it. You, Jōko, have not explored the Matter* with a Master, nor have you reached the place where everything has dropped off, so you cannot understand it or gauge its depths.

You have said, "Not five years had gone by since Great Master Baso had passed on, yet Ōbaku said of himself that he had never met the Great Master." Truly, that is not worth a laugh. Someone who is capable of being an heir to the

9. Dōgen's question is rhetorical, not literal. Ummon was a Dharma heir of Seppō and Tokusan, whereas Ōbaku's lineage goes back to Nangaku. Ōbaku died in 850 and Ummon was born in 864, so there was no physical interaction between them. Dōgen will explain what he means in the ensuing sentences.

Dharma can inherit the Dharma even after countless eons. Were there someone who was incapable of inheriting the Dharma, that person could not inherit the Dharma even in half a day or half a minute. Jōko, you are someone in the dark, befuddled and ignorant, one who has not seen the Face of the Sun and the Face of the Moon which Buddhas speak of.

You say that even though it was already some one hundred years earlier that Great Master Ummon had entered nirvana, you had heard him name you as an heir of his. Is it due to some formidable power of yours that you have heard Ummon name you as an heir? You are more whimsical than a three-year-old child! People a thousand years from now who hope to inherit the Dharma from Ummon may well have abilities ten times yours.

We will all come to your rescue by exploring with you for a bit the account of Hyakujō and Ōbaku. Hyakujō's remark, "From now on, don't you wish to be an heir of the Great Master?" is not saying, "Go inherit the Dharma from Great Master Baso." While taking a bit of time to explore the topic of a lion, in all fury, dashing off after some prey and the topic of a black turtle climbing a tree backwards, you should also thoroughly investigate progressing along the Absolute Path step-by-step.[10] You have the ability to explore through your training this step-by-step approach to inheriting the Dharma. Ōbaku's words, "I dare say I would gladly forfeit having descendants of my own," have all proved beyond your grasp. Do you know what he meant by 'my own' and who his descendants are? You needed to explore this carefully through your training. Ōbaku has fully stated the principle, concealing nothing and revealing all.

However, a certain Meditation Master named Bukkoku Ihaku, out of ignorance of how the Buddhist Ancestors inherit the Dharma, listed Jōko among Ummon's Dharma heirs.[11] This is surely a mistake. As trainees of a later time, do not imagine, out of ignorance, that Jōko may also have been doing his training with a Master.

Copied by me in the quarters of the Abbot's assistant at Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province, on the seventh day of the sixth lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (July 13, 1244).

Ejō

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10. That is, find the middle way in your training by progressing step by step, rather than by trying to dash ahead or by poking behind, thus doing your training the hard way.

11. Bukkoku helped in the preparation of one of the records of Zen monastic practitioners and Dharma heirs.

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Jōko, if, as you claim, it is possible to inherit the Dharma by relying on written words, then do all those who have given rise to enlightenment by reading Scriptures inherit the Dharma from Shakyamuni Buddha Himself? That is never the case. An enlightenment experience brought about by encountering Scriptural writings always requires certification by a genuine Master.

Jōko, you have still not read the records of Ummon's sayings, as you have claimed. Only those folks who have truly read Ummon's words have inherited the Dharma from Ummon. You have never seen Ummon with your own eyes, nor have you seen Ummon with Ummon's eyes, nor have you seen yourself with Ummon's eyes. There are many things like this that you have not thoroughly explored through your training. And what is more, you will need to buy new straw sandals time and again should you go seeking for a genuine Master from whom to inherit the Dharma. Do not say that you have inherited It from Great Master Ummon. If you go around claiming such things, then you will just be a type of non-Buddhist. Even if Hyakujō himself were to speak as you have done, it would be a huge mistake.

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On The Unbounded

(Kokū)

Translator's Introduction: While the title of this discourse may be translated as 'space', 'emptiness', or 'the void', these renderings tend to imply something that is negative, whereas *kokū* is a technical Buddhist term for That which is devoid of any obstructions: the Unbounded.

This was apparently the first formal talk that Dōgen gave in his new temple, originally called Daibutsu-ji and later renamed Eihei-ji.

Because right here is where the What exists, It causes Buddhas and Ancestors to find ways to express It. And because the ways that the Buddhas and Ancestors have expressed It have naturally been passed on from Dharma heir to Dharma heir, They have made their whole being their Master's Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow, so that it hangs suspended within the Unbounded. That which is Unbounded transcends categories such as the twenty types of emptiness. For, altogether, how could the Unbounded be limited to a mere twenty types of emptiness, since there are at least eighty-four thousand types of emptiness? And indeed there may be many more.

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Meditation Master Shakkyō Ezō of the Fuchou region once asked Meditation Master Seidō Chizō, "Coming back to the topic, do you know how to grab hold of Space?"

Seidō replied, "Of course I know how to grab hold of space."

The Master said, "And just how do you grab hold of Space?"

Seidō made a gesture with his hand as if gathering up a handful of something.

The Master said, "You do not know how to grab hold of Space."

Seidō responded, "My elder monastic brother, you who are a Master, just how do you grab hold of space?"

Thereupon, the Master grabbed hold of Seidō's nose and gave it a yank.

> Trying to suppress a yelp, Seidō exclaimed, "How awful of you! Pulling a person's nose like that! Fortunately, I've been able to get free, quick enough."[1]
>
> The Master said, "If you could have grabbed hold of me like this, you would have grasped It right from the start."

Shakkyō's question, "Coming back to the topic, do you know how to grab hold of Space?" is asking, "Is your whole being, through and through, hands and eyes?"[2]

Seidō's reply, "Of course, I know how to grab hold of space," meant for him that Space was like a lump of something. But once It is understood in that way, It becomes stained, and after Space has become stained, It is brought down to earth.[3]

Shakkyō's saying, "And just how do you grab hold of Space?" meant "As soon as you call that Reality, it has already completely changed. But even so, by going along with change, you are going towards Reality, following the Tathagata."

The statement, "Seidō made a gesture with his hand as if gathering up a handful of something," meant that even though he might know how to ride the tiger's head, he did not yet know how to grab hold of the tiger's tail.[4]

Shakkyō's saying, "You do not know how to grab hold of Space," was not simply a matter of his stating that Seidō did not have an intellectual understanding of what 'grabbing hold of Space' meant, for Seidō was at a place where he had not yet encountered the Unbounded even in his dreams. Even though that was the way things were with Seidō, Shakkyō did not want to end up trying to describe It to him.

Seidō's asking, "My elder monastic brother, you who are a Master, just how do you grab hold of space?" meant "My elder brother, express what it is in a verse or a word. Do not leave it totally up to me to get it."

Thereupon, Shakkyō grabbed hold of Seidō's nose and gave it a yank. We need to explore this through our training: Shakkyō has stuck his whole being up Seidō's Nose and Seidō fully revealed that he had been grabbed by the Nose. Even

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1. That is, he awoke to the Truth.
2. The second question here is a reference to the kōan story in Discourse 32: On Kannon, the Bodhisattva of Compassion *(Kannon)*.
3. That is, once the Unbounded is thought as being some thing, It becomes tainted with intellectualizing and is reduced to a worldly understanding.
4. That is, even though Seidō might know how to do the training, he still had not grasped the Essential Matter.

though this was how things were, the Unbounded is of a whole and It is 'stones bumping up against stones'.[5]

Seidō, trying to suppress a yelp, said, "How awful of you! Pulling a person's nose like that! Fortunately, I've been able to get free, quick enough." Earlier he had wished to encounter a True Person, but what he suddenly encountered was his True Self. At the same time, it was not that he could not have stained his True Self, it is that he had to train himself.

Shakkyō said, "If you could have grabbed hold of me like this, you would have grasped It right from the start." Well, it is not impossible that Seidō could have grasped It right from the start. Even so, Shakkyō did not lend his own strength to Seidō, because Seidō could not have grasped It by Shakkyō's extending a helping hand to Shakkyō, nor could he have grasped It by the Unbounded's extending a helping hand to the Unbounded.[6]

To put the matter in broader terms, the universe has no gaps to put 'space' into. Even so, this one account has long made Space resound with Its thunder. Since the time of Shakkyō and Seidō, there have been many trainees who have called themselves masterly teachers within the five traditional families—Sōtō, Ummon, Rinzai, Hōgen, and Igyō—but few of them have encountered, or heard of, much less fathomed, what Space is. Before and after Shakkyō and Seidō, there has been the occasional one who has played around with what Space is, but few have grabbed hold of what It is.

Shakkyō had taken hold of It, but Seidō had not caught sight of It. As Abbot of Daibutsu-ji Temple, I would like to have said to Shakkyō, "At that time when you grabbed hold of Seidō's nose, if you had wanted to grab hold of Space, you should have grabbed hold of your own Nose. And you should have understood how to grab hold of your Fingertips with your fingertips." Even so, Shakkyō knew a bit about a monk's everyday behavior of grabbing hold of Space. Even if you are a good hand at grabbing hold of Space, you need to explore through your training with your Master the ins and outs of Space. And you need to explore through your training the killing off of 'Space' and the revitalizing of It, and you need to know the relative importance of 'Space'. You need to preserve and rely upon the grasping of Space, which is, namely, your doing your utmost to train in the Way, your giving rise to the intention to realize that one's training and enlightenment are

5. That is, even though the Unbounded is totality, It is not static.

6. That is, Seidō had to rely on doing his own training, rather than depend on the Master or the Buddha Nature to do the training for him.

identical, and your listening to what Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor have put forth.

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My late Master, the Old Buddha of Tendō, once said the following, "My whole being is like the mouth of a bell suspended in empty space."[7] Clearly, you need to recognize that the whole body of space hangs in Space.

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> The eminent scholar, Abbot Seizan of Hungchou Province, once paid a visit to Baso. Baso asked him, "What Scripture do you lecture on?"
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> Seizan replied, "The *Heart Scripture*."
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> Baso then asked him, "And what do you use to lecture on It with?"
>
> Seizan replied, "I use my mind with which to lecture on It."
>
> Baso then said, "The mind is like the starring actor, our will is like its supporting player, with the six senses playing the accompanying cast. How can these possibly comprehend how to lecture on a Scripture?"
>
> Seizan responded, "Were the mind unable to give a lecture, surely empty space could hardly do it!"
>
> Baso said, "On the contrary, it is Space that is able to give a lecture."
>
> With a dismissive swish of his sleeve, Seizan departed.
>
> Baso called after him, "Learned monk!" Seizan turned his head around. Baso said, "From birth to old age, It is ever thus."
>
> Thereupon, Seizan caught It. Eventually, he went into hiding on Mount Seizan,—whence his name—and nothing more was heard from him.[8]

Accordingly, Buddhas and Ancestors alike are persons who expound the Scriptures and They invariably use Space in expounding these Scriptures. Were it not for Space, They would not be able to expound even one Scripture. Whether They expound on the mind as Scripture or expound on the body as Scripture, in either case They do the expounding by means of Space. By means of Space, They

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7. The opening line of a poem by Tendō Nyojō, quoted in Discourse 2: On the Great Wisdom That Is Beyond Discriminatory Thought (*Makahannya-haramitsu*), p. 28.

8. When someone who is erudite has an awakening, it is not uncommon for such a one to drop off his addiction to learning and 'disappear from public sight'.

manifest what They are deliberately thinking about as well as what goes beyond deliberate thought. Not only have They achieved the wise discernment from having a Master and the wise discernment that goes beyond having a Master, They have also developed Their innate intelligence, as well as Their learned intelligence, for all of these are due to Space. Their becoming Buddha and Their becoming an Ancestor must likewise have been due to Space.

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Our Twenty-first Ancestor, the Venerable Bashubanzu, once said the following, "Our physical being is the same as the realm of Space, and this proclaims the Teaching that it is equal to Space. When someone is able to awaken to Space, there is no 'absolutely right' nor is there any 'absolutely wrong' way." To be precise, at the very moment when there is the mutual encountering and mutual recognition between a person facing the wall and the Wall facing a person. the realm of Space can be described as the mind of 'fences and walls' and the mind of 'a withered tree'. For those who need to be saved in accord with their own bodily form, Avalokiteshvara* will forthwith manifest in that form and give expression to the Dharma for the sake of that person. This is what is meant by pointing to the principle of 'being like Space'. For those who need to be saved in accord with some other bodily form, Avalokiteshvara will forthwith manifest in that form and give expression to the Dharma for the sake of that person. This too is what is meant by pointing to the principle of 'being like Space'. Whether you are being controlled by the twenty-four hours of any day or are in control of the twenty-four hours of any day, in either case, they are both times when you can awaken to the Unbounded.

When a stone is large, it is large just as it is, and when a stone is small, it is small just as it is. This is the principle of things being beyond 'right' and 'wrong'. This is simply the way, at this very moment, to thoroughly explore the Unbounded as the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana.

Delivered to the assembly on the sixth day of the third lunar month in the third year of the Kangen era (April 4, 1245) at Daibutsu-ji Temple in Echizen Province.

Copied by me on the seventeenth day of the fifth lunar month in the second year of the Kōan era (June 27, 1279), while at Zenkō-ji Temple in the same land.

Giun

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* See *Glossary.*

76

On a Monk's Bowl

(Hatsu'u)

Translator's Introduction: 'A monk's bowl' *(hatsu'u)* refers not only to the physical object that is given to novices upon their being ordained and which is to serve as their mealtime bowl from then on, but also to the monk's willingness to accept of whatever is placed in one's 'bowl', be it physically or spiritually. It is therefore a symbol of the practice of all-acceptance.

Prior to the Seven Buddhas,* there was the Essential Matter* which was genuinely Transmitted to the Seven Buddhas. It was genuinely Transmitted from each of the Seven Buddhas down through each of the Seven Buddhas, so that It was genuinely Transmitted from the Seven Buddhas as a whole to the Seven Buddhas as a whole. It was genuinely Transmitted from the Seven Buddhas down through twenty-eight generations of Indian Ancestors. The twenty-eighth generation Ancestral Master, our Founding Ancestor Bodhidharma, personally went to China and genuinely Transmitted It to the second Ancestor in China, our great Ancestor Eka. It passed on through six generations from Bodhidharma until It reached Enō. What has been passed on from India through the Eastern lands for a total of fifty-one Transmissions is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching,[1] which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana: It is a monk's kesa* and a monk's bowl. Buddhas of the past have taken great care to genuinely Transmit them to other Buddhas of the past. This is the way that Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor have accurately Transmitted them.

At the same time, each and every one of Them has had Their way of expressing what Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow mean, as well as Fist and Eye, which They employed to explore through Their training what Buddhas and Ancestors are. Some have explored through Their training that a monk's bowl is the trusting heart of the Buddhas and Ancestors. And some have explored through Their training that a monk's bowl is a receptacle for what nourishes Buddhas and Ancestors. And some have explored through Their training that a monk's bowl is

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* See *Glossary.*

1. There are fifty-one Transmissions counting from Makakashō through Dōgen.

the very Eye of Buddhas and Ancestors. And some have explored through Their training that a monk's bowl is the very luminosity of Buddhas and Ancestors. And some have explored through Their training that a monk's bowl is the True Body of the Buddhas and Ancestors. And some have explored through Their training that a monk's bowl is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana. And some have explored through Their training that a monk's bowl is the place where Buddhas and Ancestors have turned Themselves around. And some have explored through Their training that the Buddhas and Ancestors are the rim and bottom of a monk's bowl. The principle underlying the exploring that such monastics do is expressed by each in his or her particular way, and there is something deeper to be explored.

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On the day in the first year of the Pao-ching era of Great Sung China (1225), when my late Master, the Old Buddha of Tendō, assumed the role of Abbot of Tendō, he entered the Dharma Hall and said the following:

> I remember a story. A monk once asked Hyakujō, "What is this thing about something being miraculous?" Hyakujō replied, "It is your sitting all by yourself on Daiyū Peak."[2]
>
> You in this great assembly should not be disturbed by this. Just let the Old Fellow kill Himself with sitting! If someone here today should suddenly ask me what a miracle is, I would simply say to that person, "What is miraculous in the first place?" Ultimately, what else is there? I have brought my monk's bowl with me from Jinzu Temple to eat my meals from.[3]

You need to know that what is miraculous is done for the sake of those who are already miraculous. For that which is miraculous, you need to use a miraculous tool, since this is a miraculous occasion. Accordingly, what manifests as something miraculous is the miraculous bowl of a monk. Thereby, you should call on the Four Guardian Kings to protect it and the various dragon lords to defend it, since this bowl is what we dedicate to the Buddhas and Ancestors and what They have entrusted to us.

Those folks who do not explore the Matter through their training within the private quarters of an Ancestor of the Buddha are given to saying that a Buddhist

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2. Daiyū Peak was the site of Hyakujō's temple.

3. Before being invited to be Abbot of Tendō, Nyojō was serving as Abbot of Jinzu Temple.

monk's kesa is something that is made of silk, or of cotton, or of some other spun material, or to saying that a Buddhist monk's bowl is something made of stone, or of porcelain, or of metal. They talk like this because they are not yet equipped with the Eye for training with a Master. The Buddha's kesa is a kesa for a Buddha. Further, you should not look upon it as being of silk or cotton. Considering it to be of such things as silk or cotton is an outmoded perspective. A Buddhist monk's bowl is a bowl for a Buddhist monk. Again, do not speak of it as being of stone or porcelain, or of metal or wood.

To speak more generally, a Buddhist monk's bowl is not something that is manufactured, nor is it something that arises only to later pass away, nor is it something that comes or goes, nor is it something subject to gain or loss. It does not span the new and old, nor is it connected with what is of the past or of the present. Even if the robe and bowl of the Buddhas and Ancestors have been brought into existence by the collective efforts of novices, they are beyond the delusions that snare and entrap novices, and even if they are brought into existence by the springing up of myriad helpful laity, they are beyond the delusions that snare and entrap lay folk. The underlying principle of this is that water is water as a result of its bringing together a varied assembly, and clouds, in turn, are clouds as a result of their bringing together a varied assembly.[4] What brings together clouds are 'clouds' and what brings together water are 'waters'. A monk's bowl is one that is simply composed by a varied assembly, a bowl that is simply composed of all their hearts, a bowl that is simply composed of Emptiness, a bowl that is simply composed of monks' bowls. A monk's bowl is restricted by 'a monk's bowl'; a monk's bowl is tainted by 'a monk's bowl'.[5]

The monk's bowl that novices now receive is the monk's bowl that the Four Guardian Kings offered to the Buddha. If the monk's bowl were not that which the Four Guardian Kings offered, it would not be the one that appears right before our eyes. The monk's bowl that has now been genuinely Transmitted everywhere by the Buddha's Ancestors who have received the Buddha's Treasure House of the

4. There is a word play here that is lost in translation. Novices were known as *unsui*, literally 'water and clouds', because they would flow like water or drift about like clouds, going from monastery to monastery in search of the teacher they would come to regard as their Master. Coming into a monastery—particularly during the summer retreat period—they would bring their assembled talents into action by taking up collective projects, such as making bowl sets and monastic robes.

5. That is, if we think in terms of something called 'a monk's bowl', we tend to limit its meaning to its most literal sense.

Eye of the True Teaching is the monk's bowl that is beyond past and present. As a consequence, now that we have spotted, and broken free from, the old views held onto by men of iron will, we no longer need to be wedded to the opinion that this monk's bowl of ours is simply something made of wood. And we have gone beyond the view that it is something constructed from the bits and pieces that our sense organs pick up. And it does not hinder the mind that distinguishes rocks from jewels. Do not speak of it as being of jade or of tile.[6] Do not speak of it as being but a bit of carved wood. By not speaking thus, we affirm what a monk's bowl really is.

Given to the assembly at Daibutsu-ji Temple in Echizen Province on the twelfth day of the third lunar month in the third year of the Kangen era (April 10, 1245).

Copied by me in the office of the Abbot's assistant at Daibutsu-ji Temple on the twenty-seventh day of the seventh lunar month in the third year of the Kangen era (August 20, 1245).

Ejō

6. 'Jade and tile' is a metaphor for what is polishable and what is not polishable.

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On the Summer Retreat

(Ango)

Translator's Introduction: This discourse, dated at the end of summer, puts forth the purpose and methods of holding a ninety-day summer retreat, as Dōgen had just conducted it at Eihei-ji, his new temple in Echizen Province.

Whereas some who have studied the writings of Dōgen have understood certain of his remarks in Discourse 81: On Leaving Home Life Behind *(Shukke)* as rejecting lay and female discipleship, Dōgen is unequivocal about the issue in the latter part of this discourse, where he says, "Keep in mind that male and female lay trainees can also do the retreat," a retreat that Dōgen considered fundamental to the practice of a Buddhist monastic.

My late Master, the Old Buddha of Tendō, once recited a poem of his during an informal session at the beginning of a summer retreat:

> *Set your bones upright upon level ground,*
> *And to seclude yourself, scoop out a cavern in space.*
> *Pass forthwith beyond the gate of dualities,*
> *Only taking with you a darkness as dark as a black-lacquered pail.*

Accordingly, since you already have that nose ring of yours in place and have not avoided eating food, stretching out your legs, or taking a snooze, you will remain so for the rest of your life.[1] Since this is the way things are, you have not slackened and wasted your time by putting down your tools. Those tools include the ninety-day summer retreat, which is the very crown and countenance of Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor, all of Whom have continually experienced it intimately in Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow. Taking up the Eye and the head crown of the Buddhas and Ancestors, we make them into the days and months of ninety days of summer. One summer retreat is therefore something equivalent to Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor. The summer retreat, from beginning to end, is what an Ancestor is. Beyond this, there is not a single additional inch of ground, nor is there a great earth.

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1. 'The nose ring in place' is a reference to having learned how to train oneself, just as one goes about domesticating a water buffalo.

The gatepost for the summer retreat is beyond the new and beyond the old, and it is beyond coming and beyond going. The measure of this retreat is measured by the Fist, and its form has been in the form of a nose ring. Even so, because we began a summer retreat, it came, filling all space, without excluding anything in all the ten quarters. And because we ended the summer retreat, it has gone, having torn asunder the whole universe, until not an inch of ground remains. For this reason, when the summer retreat began, it resembled your giving rise to your spiritual question. And when it came to an end, it resembled your having torn asunder the nets and cages of your delusions. Even though this is how it was, there are some of you who may well have personally experienced it as hindering you from beginning to end. Well, for ten thousand miles there has not been an inch of grass, so come on, pay me back for ninety days' board!

The venerable monk, Ōryū Shishin, once said, "For thirty-some years I have tread the mountain paths as a mendicant monk. With ninety days I make me a summer. I cannot add even a single day to that, nor can I subtract one either." So, what the Eye of a wanderer of thirty-some years has penetrated is simply that a summer retreat is comprised of ninety days. Were he to add a single day, the other days would vie to be that extra day, and were he to fall one day short, his other days would vie not to be that missing day. Furthermore, he was unable to leap free from his cavernous snare of delusion. This leaping free is simply a springing up from this ninety-day pit by using one's own hands and feet.

Treating a single summer as comprised of ninety days is a tool among us, but because this is not something that was first concocted by some Ancestor of the Buddha all on His own, it has come down to us this very day as a natural endowment from Buddha after Buddha, Ancestor after Ancestor, and Dharma heir after Dharma heir. Hence, to do a summer retreat is to see Buddhas and Ancestors, as well as to meet Them, for a summer retreat has, for ever so long, created Buddhas and Ancestors.

Even though this worldly, temporal measurement of 'one summer is comprised of ninety days' is a measurement that the mind thinks up, it is not simply one eon or ten eons, nor is it simply hundreds of thousands of immeasurable eons. Ordinary times are used up by hundreds of thousands of immeasurable eons, whereas these ninety days of a summer retreat use up hundreds of thousands of immeasurable eons. As a result, even though immeasurable eons resemble the ninety days wherein you meet a Buddha, these ninety days do not necessarily depend on there being any eons. Thus, you should explore through your training that the one summer comprised of ninety days is simply a

measurement of one's Eye. This is how one who attends the retreat in both body and mind is.

Both making use of acting freely and leaping beyond making use of acting freely have their origins and their foundations. Even so, our summer retreat has not come from some other place or from some other time, nor has it arisen just in this particular place at this particular time. When we get hold of what the origin of these ninety days is, they immediately come forth, and when we grope for what the foundation of 'ninety days' is, it immediately comes forth. Ordinary folk, as well as the saintly, treat them as a comfortable cave for them to reside in, but these ninety days go far, far beyond the realm of the ordinary and the saintly. These ninety days cannot be reached by thinking about them, nor can they be reached by not thinking about them, nor are they simply something that is unreachable by thinking about or not thinking about them.

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> When the World-honored One was residing in the country of Magadha, He once gave a Dharma talk for those assembled. At that time, He was intent on performing a pure summer retreat. Accordingly, he spoke to Ananda, saying, "If I am continually giving expression to the Dharma, my senior disciples, as well others in the four classes—male and female monastics and male and female laity—will not give rise to respect for It. So I am now going to enter Shakrendra's Cave and sit for the ninety days of summer.[2] When people suddenly show up and ask for Teaching, say to them on My behalf, 'All thoughts and things are beyond arising, and all thoughts and things are beyond decay.'" Having spoken thus, He concealed Himself within the cave and sat in meditation.

Since then, two thousand ninety-four years have already passed—it being now the third year of the Japanese era of Kangen. Many of His descendants who did not have entry into the private quarters of their Master would see the Buddha's sequestering Himself as a form of expressing the Dharma without using words. That wrong-minded bunch today merely think:

> The Buddha went into the cave and to meditate for the summer because using words to express It is not completely the Truth but is merely a virtuous expedient means. To reach the Truth, one cuts oneself off from using the spoken word and lets the intellective

2. Shakrendra's Cave is a cave on Vulture Peak that was used as a place for meditation.

> function die out. This is because going beyond words and going beyond intellect are how one reaches the Truth, since having words and having thoughts is entirely different from the Truth. This is why the Buddha cut Himself off from human beings during the ninety summer days that He sat within the cave.

What these folks are saying runs counter to the World-honored One's intention as a Buddha. If such people are going to say that His intention was to cut off speech and let the mind's functions die out, then all productive human activities and undertakings would involve cutting off speech and letting the mind's functions die out. To speak of 'cutting off speech' means all speech, and to speak of 'letting the mind's functions die out' means all functions of the mind. And what is more, this account about Him was never given for the sake of esteeming the absence of words. In all earnestness, He dragged His whole being through mud and water, and went amidst the weeds that had sprouted up, never shrinking from giving voice to the Dharma in order to help human beings reach the Other Shore, never failing to turn the Wheel of the Dharma to help rescue them. If any of the bunch of you who call yourselves His offspring were to say that His sitting through the ninety days of the summer was advocating silence, then I must say to you, "Give me back the ninety days that you spent sitting here this summer!"

The Buddha enjoined Ananda to say on His behalf, "All thoughts and things are beyond arising, and all thoughts and things are beyond decay." Do not lightly pass over what the Buddha was doing. In short, how could His sequestering Himself in a cave and sitting in meditation for the summer possibly be beyond speaking or beyond expressing the Teaching? Let's suppose for the moment that Ananda had asked the World-honored One, "How am I to express the meaning of 'All thoughts and things are beyond arising, and all thoughts and things are beyond decay'? Even were I to try to express It like this, how am I to go about doing so?" Having spoken thus, he would have listened carefully to the World-honored One's reply. Speaking more generally for the moment, the Buddha's behavior is the foremost expression of turning the Wheel of the Dharma. It is not the paramount evidence of silence. Further, do not take it to be evidence of wordless Teaching. Should you take It to be wordless Teaching, you would be just like Mr. To, who, sad to say, mistook the three-foot Dragon Spring Sword for a weaving shuttle and hung it on the wall of his humble abode.

Accordingly, the ninety-day summer sitting is the ancient turning of the Wheel of the Dharma and it is the ancient practice of Buddhas and Ancestors. In the present account, there is the phrase, "At that time, He was intent on performing a pure summer retreat." Keep in mind that what He practiced was ninety days of sitting in a summer retreat. Those who try to evade this are non-Buddhists.

To speak more generally, when the World-honored One was in the world, He sometimes did a ninety-day summer retreat in the Trayastrimsha Heavens and sometimes He did it in the quiet caves on Vulture Peak along with five hundred monastics. Throughout all five nations of India where the Buddha and His retinue traveled, when the time was ripe, without discussing where, they would do a pure summer retreat, which was their carrying out a ninety-day summer retreat. It is what Buddhas and Ancestors of the present carry out as the One Great Matter,* for it is the unsurpassed Way of unifying training and enlightenment. In the *Scripture of Brahma's Net* there is mention of a winter retreat, but how it was done has not been passed on; only the method for performing the ninety-day summer retreat has been passed on. It has been accurately Transmitted to me personally in the fifty-first generation.

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In the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple*, it says the following, "If monks on pilgrimages wish to begin their summer retreat at a particular monastery, they should settle in half a month before the opening day. What is important is that they not be hurried in making their tea offerings and paying their respects." 'Half a month before' means 'during the last ten days of the third lunar month'. Accordingly, you should arrive and get settled in during the third lunar month. From the first day of the fourth lunar month on, monks are not to go outside the confines of the monastery. The doors of the reception rooms in various quarters, as well as those to the rooms for temporary lodging of itinerant monks are all locked. Accordingly, from the first day of the fourth lunar month on, itinerant monks will be making the retreat within the confines of the temple buildings or they will have settled into a monk's hut. Some may do the retreat in the residence of a lay Buddhist, for which there is a precedent. All these are rules of the Buddhas and Ancestors, so you need to do the practice and training out of a desire to emulate the ancient ways. Once the Fists and Noses have all taken up residence in the halls of the monastery, they hang up their traveling bag in their place for the duration of the retreat.

Despite this, that band of demons say, "The perspective of Mahayana* is what is important. The summer retreat is a practice of Hinayanists of the Lesser Course,* so by all means, do not engage in the practice of it." Such folks have never encountered, much less heard of, the Buddha Dharma. Supreme, fully perfected wisdom is synonymous with doing meditation throughout the summer at a ninety-day retreat. Even though the Ultimate is to be found in both the Greater

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* See *Glossary.*

and the Lesser Courses, Its branching, leafing out, flowering, and fruiting emerge from the ninety-day retreat.

First off, after breakfast on the third day of the fourth lunar month, the following ceremony is performed. Prior to the first day of the fourth lunar month, the senior monk in charge of the trainees within a Meditation Hall has already prepared the notice boards announcing the ceremony of *kairō.*[3] Right after breakfast, he hangs up these boards in front of the halls where the monks are residing. That is, he hangs them outside the latticed window which is to the left of the front entrance. He hangs them after breakfast and removes them after the bell is rung at the end of the day's practice. These are hung from the third day through the fifth day. The times to hang them and to take them down remain the same.

There is a set style and order for signing in on these boards. The order is not according to one's general position in the hierarchy of the retreat temple as 'temple officer' or 'senior monk', but just according to the date when the monk first took the monastic preceptual vows. Those who may be senior monks or temple officers elsewhere should sign in as Chief Junior or Prior or whatever.[4] Those who have served in various offices should write their highest office. Anyone who has ever served as an Abbot puts down 'So-and-so of the Western Hall'.[5] Although someone may have served as Abbot of a small temple, this may not be known by other monks, so, as often as not, he may choose not to write this title. When a monk of the Western Hall stays in the training assembly of his Master, there are examples where such a one does not follow the custom of the Western Hall and simply refers to himself as Veteran Monk So-and-so. There are many excellent examples of such a monk taking a nap in the common room of the Abbot's attendants who take care of their Master's robes and monk's bowl. Also, there is an old tradition of such a veteran monk serving as the attendant in charge of the Master's robe and bowl, or as the attendant responsible for handling incense offerings, or what is more, in any other office that is assigned at the discretion of the Master. In a large temple, when someone else's disciples come to the retreat, even if they served the Abbot of a small temple, it is a reliable precedent for them to be given a title for the ninety-day

3. *Kairō* is a ceremony in which monks enter their name in a registry along with the number of years since their ordination, that is, since taking the preceptual vows of a monastic.

4. That is, they should register in accordance with the specific position held in their own temple.

5. 'So-and so of the Western Hall' refers to the retired head monk of another temple, one who is staying in the guest quarters on the west side of the monastery. The Western Hall is also the place where retired monks in their Master's assembly are sequestered.

retreat, such as Chief Junior, Clerical Officer, Chief Supervisory Officer, or Prior, for instance. Those who use their title from some minor post in a small temple cause laughter among those in the monastery. A sensible person who has been even the Abbot of a small temple will sign himself without using that title.

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The board is set up in the following style:

Such-and-such Temple on Such-and-such Mountain in Such-and-such District of Such-and-such Province is holding a summer retreat this summer. For the Sangha attending, the number of years that each has passed since taking the monastic Precepts is as follows:

The Venerable Kaundinya [6]
The Venerable Abbot

Precept recipients in 1st year of the Kempō era:

So-and-so Veteran	So-and-so Librarian
So-and-so Veteran	So-and-so Veteran

Precepts recipients in 2nd year of Kempō era:

So-and-so of Western Hall	So-and-so Trainees' Supervisor
So-and-so Chief Junior	So-and-so Guestmaster
So-and-so Veteran	So-and-so Bathhouse Monk

Precepts recipients in 1st year of Kenryaku era:

So-and-so Grounds Supervisor	So-and-so Abbot's Assistant
So-and-so Chief Junior	So-and-so Chief Junior
So-and-so Chief Cook	So-and-so Meditation Hall Head

Precepts recipients in 2nd year of Kenryaku era:

So-and-so Clerical Officer	So-and-so Veteran
So-and-so of Western Hall	So-and-so Chief Junior
So-and-so Veteran	So-and-so Veteran

The preceding is respectfully offered. If there are any errors, please point them out. Respectfully written.

Respectfully submitted by So-and-so Supervisor of Trainees on the third day of the fourth lunar month in such-and-such an era.

6. Ajnyata Kaundinya was Shakyamuni Buddha's first disciple.

This is how it should be written. We write it on white paper. We write it in the standard, non-cursive style. We do not use the cursive grass style or the seal style. To hang a board, attach a cord about the width of two rice grains to the top of the board from which to hang it, just like we do with a rattan blind or a vertical tablet. It is taken down on the fifth day of the fourth lunar month after the bell is rung at the end of the day's practice.

On the eighth day of the fourth lunar month, the community celebrates the birth of the Buddha.

After the midday meal on the thirteenth day of the fourth lunar month, the monks assemble in their own common room where a tea ceremony is performed, followed by a Scripture recitation. The Dormitory Heads perform these tasks. It is their duty to provide hot water and to burn incense. A Dormitory Head sits in the innermost part of the monks' common room, seated to the left of the saintly image of the hall's bodhisattva.*[7] Monks such as the Chief Juniors and the senior monks do not participate in the Scripture recitation; it is only done by the monks staying in that particular hall.

Towards evening, a senior monk prepares an offering of incense and flowers at the shrine of the Guardian of the Field, placing it before the shrine's tablet.[8] The monks then assemble before the shrine to perform the ceremonial recitation.

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The Method for Doing the Recitation

After all the monks have assembled, the Abbot makes an incense offering, followed by the administrative monks and monastic managers of the monastery, all in the same manner in which incense is offered during the ceremony of bathing the Buddha's image. Next, the Supervisor of Trainees gets up from his place and, going to the front, bows with hands in gasshō,* first to the Abbot and then before the shrine of the Guardian of the Field. Then, while facing north—that is, facing the shrine—he conducts the mindful recitation, saying the following:

> Balmy breezes fan over the fields and the emperor of heat rules everywhere. This is a time when, in obedience to the Lord of the Law,

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7. Such a 'saintly image' *(shōsō)* will most likely be that of the Buddha, Manjushri, Maitreya, or Avalokiteshvara.

8. The Guardian of the Field Shrine is dedicated to whatever spiritual beings might have already inhabited the grounds upon which the temple was erected. A shrine is built for them and they are respectfully asked to serve as guardians of the temple.

we take not a step from the temple. These are the days for protecting the lives of the Buddha's disciples. We have assembled the whole community in all humility and respectfully visit your sacred shrine. We recite the names of the great Buddhas of myriad virtues and offer the merit therefrom to you, the Guardian Deity of all the monastic halls. We pray for your divine protection that we may be able to accomplish this retreat; out of respect we take refuge in the Holy Sangha. Now let us invoke the names of the Ten Buddhas:

The completely pure Buddha, Vairochana* Buddha,
Dharma Itself,[9]
The complete Buddha Who has been rewarded for His
previous training,
Shakyamuni Buddha, one of the many Buddhas who
have appeared in the many worlds,
Maitreya* Buddha Who will appear in the future,
All the Buddhas in all directions and in the Three Worlds,
Holy Manjushri* Bodhisattva;
The great and wise Samantabhadra* Bodhisattva,
The great and kind Avalokiteshvara,*
All the Bodhisattvas and Ancestors,
The great Prajñāpāramitā.[10]

We offer the merits of this recitation to the Guardians of the Field—the dragons and the celestial hosts—and to all who protect and preserve the true Dharma. Bowing, we pray that your spiritual light will aid all of us to manifest the merits of our deeds, and that your pure light will flourish and confer upon us selfless joy. Once again, let us join together to recite:

All the Buddhas in all directions and in the Three Worlds,
All the Bodhisattvas and Ancestors,
The great Prajñāpāramitā.

Then the drum sounds and the whole assembly of monks immediately go to their sitting places in the Cloud Hall for a serving of sweetened hot water. The preparation of sweetened water is a responsibility of the officers who oversee the

9. A gong is struck before each name is recited.

10. This is a reference to the Bodhisattva who is the personification of Great Wisdom. She is regarded as the mother who gives birth to all the Buddhas.

Kitchen. The assembly goes to the Cloud Hall and circumambulates the hall in seniority order, Upon arriving at their own place, they each sit facing outwards. One of the senior administrative officers does the prescribed ceremony, that is, he or she makes an incense offering, and so forth. In the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple,* it says, "Originally, the Prior would perform this ceremony, but according to circumstances, the Supervisor of Trainees may act on the Prior's behalf."

It is proper that, before the Mindful Recitation, a notice should be copied onto an announcement board and presented to the Chief Junior. The administrative officer, upon seeing the Chief Junior wearing a kesa* and carrying his or her bowing mat, performs the ceremony of twice offering to spread one's mat and then doing three bows.[11] The Chief Junior responds with bows of his or her own, done in the same manner. A novice monk then presents the Chief Junior with a box containing the notice board wrapped in a cloth. The Chief Junior accepts it and then sees the officer off.

The form of the notice is as follows:

> This evening, on behalf of the Chief Junior, the Kitchen Hall officers are offering green tea and cakes in the Cloud Hall for the benefit of the community. We humbly inform you of this ceremony to celebrate the opening of the retreat, and respectfully pray that you, the community, will honor us with your illustrious presence.
>
> Respectfully presented on this 14th day of the 4th lunar month in the 3rd year of the Kangen era (May 11, 1244) by So-and-so of the Kitchen Hall.

This is signed with the first name of the presiding officer of the kitchen. After presenting the board to the Chief Junior, the officer asks the novice to post it up in front of the Cloud Hall, to the left of the hall's front entrance.

On the outside wall to the south of the front entrance there is a lacquered board on which the notice is to be posted. There is a leather envelope to the side of this board. It is aligned with the right edge of the board and fastened with a bamboo peg. This board is made according to a set method. The writing is in small characters about half an inch high; they should not be too big. The message on the front of the envelope is as follows:

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11. This ceremony entails a monk's beginning to spread his or her bowing mat in preparation for doing three bows, but each time they are signaled with a gesture by the monk who is being honored that such formal bowing is unnecessary, whereupon the monk ends up by simply doing three standing bows without spreading his or her mat.

> An invitation to the Chief Junior, along with all the other monks of the community, enclosed with respect from the monks of the Kitchen Hall.

After the ceremony of green tea and cakes, the board is taken down.

Before breakfast on the fifteenth day, the temple officers and senior monks, as well as the Abbot's disciples and fellow monks, first enter the Abbot's quarters to pay their respects. But if, on the previous day, the Abbot had excused them from performing this courtesy, they should not visit the Abbot's quarters at all. 'Being excused from performing this courtesy' means that the Abbot has had someone paste up a notice board on which he has written a verse or some words of Teaching. This is posted either on the east side of the entrance to his quarters or in front of the Cloud Hall.

After breakfast on the fifteenth, the Supervisor of Trainees hangs on the east wall that is in front of the Meditation Hall a single *kairō* board that he had prepared in advance. He hangs it above the front hall, that is, between the pillars to the south of the front entrance. In the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple,* it says that the senior monk in charge of the Meditation Hall puts up a *kairō* board and makes an alms offering of incense and flowers. (He puts this board up in front of the Meditation Hall.) After the midday meal on the fifteenth day of the fourth lunar month, a board announcing a Mindful Recitation ceremony is hung in front of the Meditation Hall.[12] Similar boards are also hung up outside other temple buildings.

Also on the fifteenth day, after the Abbot has given his Dharma talk, he comes down from the Dharma seat and stands before its steps. He then steps onto the north corner of the bowing seat and stands facing south.[13] A temple officer approaches him and performs the ceremony of twice offering to spread one's mat and then doing three bows. After the first offering, he says the following:

> On this occasion of our being sequestered during the summer retreat, we are able to serve you with a towel and water jug. We pray that, due solely to the strength of your Dharma, O Venerable Monk, we shall meet with no impediments.

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12. The Mindful Recitation ceremony consists primarily of the recitation of the Names of the Ten Buddhas.

13. The bowing seat *(haiseki)* is a bowing mat that lies in front of the altar. During ceremonies, it is the customary place where a celebrant stands or spreads his bowing mat to do his prostrations.

As his next offering, he expresses the compliments of the season by wishing for the cold weather to warm and then does three informal bows.[14] Once he has finished paying the compliments of the season and has done his three bows, he picks up his mat and continues, saying the following:

> How fortunate we are that the early summer is finally warming up. Reflecting upon this period when our Dharma Lord has opened this summer retreat, I am humbled by the thought that our gratitude is not equal to the thousand blessings that you, our Venerable Monk who is the Head of our Hall, bestow upon us lowly trainees.

After this, the temple officer responds by placing his mat on the ground and then doing three more informal bows. Saying nothing, the Abbot and all others respond with three informal bows.

The Abbot then responds, as follows:

> It is likewise my great good fortune to be able to carry out a summer retreat here with all of you. And I earnestly desire that you, So-and-so the Chief Junior, and you, So-and-so the Prior, along with all you others, will assist me, through the strength of your Teaching, to go beyond all impediments.

The Chief Junior, along with the whole community, then follows the same procedure of making three informal bows. At this time, the Chief Junior, along with the whole community, including the officers, all face north and bow. Only the Abbot faces south, standing in front of the stairs to his Dharma seat. The Abbot then spreads his bowing mat upon the bowing seat.

Next, the Chief Junior and the rest of the assembly perform the ceremony of twice offering to spread their mat and then doing three bows before the Abbot. At this time, the Master's disciples, his attendants, his Dharma relatives,[15] and the novices remain standing to one side; they should not blindly follow the rest of the assembly in paying their personal respects. 'To remain standing to one side' means 'to stand along the eastern wall of the Dharma Hall'. If the screened-off area for donors is at the east wall, then the aforesaid monks should stand near the Dharma drum or along the western wall.

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14. The most common style of doing informal bows is by placing one's folded bowing mat on the ground and doing a prostration with one's forehead touching one's mat.

15. One's Dharma relatives—Dharma brothers and sisters—are monks who share the same Master as oneself.

When the assembly has finished their prostrations, they return to the temple kitchen led by the administrative officers, who stand at the right side.[16] Next, the Chief Junior leads the rest of the assembled monks to the kitchen to pay their respects to the Kitchen Officers, that is, they do three informal bows to them. At this same time in the Dharma Hall, the Abbot's disciples, his assistants, his Dharma relatives, and the novices do their prostrations to him. His Dharma relatives should do the ceremony of twice offering to spread one's mat and then doing three bows, with the Abbot returning these bows. The Abbot's disciples and his assistants each do nine prostrations; the Abbot does not return these bows. The novices do either nine or twelve prostrations, which the Abbot receives whilst just holding his hands in gasshō.

Next, the Chief Junior goes in front of the Monks' Hall and, to the right of the entrance, on a level with the southern end of the administrative officers' meditation seats—that is, in front of the Cloud Hall and facing south—stands before the monks. The assembled monks face north and do three informal bows while turned towards the Chief Junior. The Chief Junior then leads the assembled monks into the Monks' Hall. In order of monastic seniority, the monks circumambulate the hall and stand before their own place. The administrative officers enter the hall and do three bows, spreading their mats before the main image in the hall. Next, they do three informal bows to the assembly, to which the assembled monks bow in response. The six administrative officers then do one circumambulation of the hall and, according to rank, stand by their place, their hands in shashu.*

The Abbot enters the hall, offers incense before the main image, does three full prostrations, and then rises. During this time, his disciples stand out of the way, behind the main image, whereas his Dharma relatives follow the other monks. Next, the Abbot does three informal bows to the Chief Junior. That is, the Abbot remains standing in his place and does these bows while facing west. The Chief Junior, along with the community, bows in response, as before.

The Abbot then circumambulates the hall and departs. The Chief Junior, leaving by the south side of the front entrance, sees the Abbot off. After the Abbot has departed, all the monks, from the Chief Junior down, spread their bowing mats and perform three full bows, facing outwards from their sitting place, and then recite in unison, as follows:

16. The administrative officers are the Chief Supervisory Officer, the Prior, the Treasurer, the Supervisor of Trainees, the Chief Cook, and the Grounds Maintenance Officer.

> How fortunate we are to be doing this retreat together. I fear lest my acts of body, speech, and mind should not prove to be good, and I pray that I will show benevolence and compassion towards all.

The prostrations following this are done thrice with one's bowing mat spread out fully. Having completed this, the Chief Junior, the Clerical Officer, the Chief Librarian, and the other department heads each return to their quarters. Those who are staying in the monks' common quarters,[17] from the Head of the Quarters on down, all do three informal bows to each other, reciting the same verse that was recited in the Main Hall.

After this, the Abbot makes his rounds of the various offices, beginning with the Kitchen Hall. The monks follow after the Abbot in sequence, accompanying him to his quarters and then withdrawing. That is to say, the Abbot goes first to the Kitchen Hall. Once he has paid his respects to the Kitchen Officers and departs, he continues making his rounds, with the Kitchen Officers following behind him. Following after the Kitchen Officers are those who are staying in or around the Eastern Quarters. At this time, the Abbot does not enter the Infirmary, but turns west from the Eastern Quarters, passing by the Temple Gate and continuing on his rounds of the various quarters. Those who are residing near the Temple Gate join the procession. From the south, the Abbot goes around to visit the quarters on the west side. At this time, while he is traversing the west side, he is facing north. By this time, the elderly retired monks, retired officers, retired assistant officers, those over one hundred years old, and veteran monks who live in private quarters as well as the monk in charge of the toilets, among others, will have joined the procession. The Supervisor of Trainees and the Chief Junior, among others, will follow behind them. Following them are the monks from the common quarters. The quarters are circumambulated according to the convenience of their location. This is what we call "the monks' escort".

Thence, the Abbot goes up the western stairs to his quarters and then, positioning himself directly in front of his quarters, he faces south with hands in shashu. The whole assembly, from the administrative officers on down, face north and make monjin* to the Abbot. This monjin should be especially deep. The Abbot makes monjin in response. The assembly then withdraws.

My late Master did not lead the assembly to his quarters; when he reached the Dharma Hall, he stood before the stairs of the hall, facing south with hands in shashu. The assembly made monjin and then retired. This was the traditional ceremony from ancient times. After this, the monks in the assembly would pay

17. As distinct from the resident monks who stay in the Meditation Hall.

their respects to each other, as they pleased. They paid their respects by doing bows to each other. For instance, those from the same home district—even dozens of them—would exchange prostrations, some in the Hall of Illumination and others in some convenient place in the corridors,[18] and they would offer to each other the congratulatory verse on attending the retreat together. At the same time, there are some whose words resemble those spoken formally in the Main Hall, and there are also personal ways some have of expressing their feelings. And there are also Masters who have brought their disciples. In that case, the disciples will invariably offer their bows, doing nine full prostrations. Those who are Dharma relatives of the Abbot do the ceremony of two offerings and three bows or do three full prostrations. The prostrations of any Dharma relative of anyone in the assembly should be the same. And there will be prostrations to the younger and elder brothers of one's Master. Those who sit and sleep next to each other in the Meditation Hall all do prostrations to each other, as well as to those who are mutually acquainted or have done a retreat together in the past. Those who are veteran monks living in private quarters, as well as the Chief Supervisory Officer, the Prior, the Supervisor of Trainees, the Chief Cook, the Grounds Maintenance Officer, the monks of the Western Hall, and the Teacher of the Female Trainees should all visit each other's quarters or visit each other's sitting place in the Meditation Hall and do their bows and greetings. When we go to visit someone and find the entryway to their quarters too crowded to enter, we write out a card and attach it beside their entrance. The card is written on white paper an inch or so high and about two inches wide. The style of writing is as follows:

So'un, Eshō, and others.
Congratulations, with three bows!
or
So-and-so.
Salutations and congratulations!
or
So-and-so of Such-and-such Hall.
Congratulations, with three bows!
or
So-and-so bows.
Congratulations!
or

18. The Hall of Illumination is a small room next to the Monks' Hall, which is used by the Chief Junior to give Dharma talks to novice monks when the Abbot is unable to perform that duty.

So-and-so
Humbly offering prostrations.

The styles of writing are many, but these give the general idea. So, a large number of these cards can be seen beside entrances. They are not attached to the left of an entrance, but to the right of it. These cards are taken down after the midday meal by the person in charge of the quarters. On that day the rattan blinds are raised on the entryways of all halls and quarters.

There is a custom that the Head of a Temple, his or her administrative officers, and the Chief Junior, in succession, offer tea and cakes. However, this can be abridged, or dispensed with, for those on a remote island or deep in the mountains, as they simply do what is within their means. Retired senior monks, as well as monks who are serving as temporary Chief Juniors for the duration of the retreat, offer tea and cakes in their quarters, especially for the various temple officers.

Having thus opened the summer retreat, we do our utmost in practicing the Way. You may well have been pursuing the Way and keeping to the Precepts, but if you have not done a summer retreat, you are not an offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors, much less a Buddha or Ancestor. By virtue of a summer retreat, Jetavana Park and the Divine Vulture Peak will fully manifest themselves for you. The training ground of a summer retreat is the realm of the Mind seal* of the Buddhas and Ancestors and is the dwelling place of all Buddhas.

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The Closing of the Summer Retreat

As it says in the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple*, "On the thirteenth day of the seventh lunar month, the serving of tea and cakes and the reciting of Scriptures in the Common Room is once more the responsibility of the one who is the head of the Common Room for that month."

The mindful recitation of the names of the Buddhas on the evening of the fourteenth, as well as the attending of a Dharma talk, the paying of one's respects, the circumambulating of the quarters, and the serving of tea and cakes, are all, one after the other, the same as at the opening of the retreat. Only the wording of notices is different. The notice for the kitchen staff's offering of tea reads as follows:

> The kitchen staff will offer tea and cakes in the Cloud Hall this evening, especially for the benefit of the Chief Junior and the community. We will perform a small closing ceremony. We humbly

> pray that you will be so kind as to join in. Spoken in respect, So-and-so, the monks of the Kitchen Hall.

The words for the mindful recitation before the Shrine of the Guardian of the Field are as follows:

> Golden breezes fan over the fields and the emperor of frost rules everywhere. The time is as that when the Buddha, Lord of Enlightenment, commenced the monks' retreat. It is the day of our being a whole year older in the Dharma. Three months have passed without disaster and the whole Community is at ease. We recite the names of the great Buddhas of myriad virtues as we humbly report to you, the Guardian Deity of all the monastery halls, out of respect for you. We take refuge in the Holy Sangha as we all recite Their names.

The mindful recitation from here on is the same as at the opening of the summer retreat.

After the formal talk in the Dharma Hall, the administration officers, along with the other officers, recite the following in unison:

> Humbly, we rejoice that the Dharma year has been fulfilled without difficulties. This is undoubtedly due to the protective strength of the Master's Dharma. We cannot fully express our deep gratitude.

The Abbot then responds with these words:

> Now that the Dharma year has been fulfilled, we all offer our thanks to So-and-so Chief Junior and to So-and-so Prior, among others, for sharing with us the strength of their Dharma. I cannot fully express my deep gratitude.

The Chief Junior and staff of the Hall, as well as the Dormitory Heads of the various quarters and their staff, say the following:

> During the ninety days of the summer retreat, we have relied upon each other, but I fear lest my acts of body, speech, and mind have not proved to be good, and I humbly pray that you will show benevolence and compassion towards me.

The administrative officers, along with the other officers of the temple, then make the following announcement:

> We ask those brothers and sisters who are planning to travel on to remain with us for tea before departing. This, of course, does not apply to those who have some pressing engagement.

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This ceremony of the ninety-day summer retreat is fundamental to us since time immemorial—from before to after the Age of the Lords of Awe-inspiring Voices. The Buddhas and Ancestors have placed great emphasis on just this ceremony alone. And the non-Buddhists and the demon hordes have yet to corrupt this one ceremony. Not a single one who is an offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors within the three nations of India, China, and Japan has ever failed to perform it, but those outside the Way have never studied it. Because of the long-cherished desire of the Buddhas and Ancestors for the One Great Matter, from the morning of Their entering the Way until the evening of Their entering nirvana, what They proclaim is simply the underlying principle of the summer retreat. Even though there are differences among the five monastic families in India, they are alike in observing the ninety-day summer retreat, inexorably practicing the Way of enlightenment. Of the nine monastic families in China, not even one has ever violated the rule of the summer retreat. Those who have never done a ninety-day summer retreat should never be called a monk who is a disciple of the Buddha. This means that we should not only do this practice during the bodhisattva stages for awakening, but we should also continue the practice of a summer retreat after having awakened. The Great Awakened, World-honored One performed the practice of a summer retreat throughout His life, not missing a single summer. Keep in mind that it was what the Buddha realized as the ultimate fruition.

At the same time, although you may laugh at one who has not done a ninety-day summer retreat and yet calls himself an offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors, such a foolish person is not even worth a laugh. Do not listen to the words of that bunch who talk like that. Do not get into discussions with such people. Do not sit with them. Do not even walk the same path with them. For, in the Buddha Dharma, we handle such wicked people by using the method of Brahma's rod of silence.

You should simply understand the ninety-day summer retreat as the Buddhas and Ancestors have done, and rely upon it, and preserve it. It has been genuinely Transmitted from the Seven Buddhas* down to Makakashō. It was genuinely Transmitted by Dharma heir after Dharma heir through the twenty-eight Indian Ancestors. When the Twenty-eighth Ancestor came to China, he genuinely Transmitted It to our Great Ancestor, the Second Chinese Ancestor, Great Master Eka. From the Second Ancestor, It was genuinely Transmitted by Dharma heir after Dharma heir and has been genuinely Transmitted down to this very day. When I went to China, I directly received the genuine Transmission from within the assembly of an Ancestor of the Buddha, and I am doing the genuine Transmission

in Japan. Now that you are within an assembly where the genuine Transmission exists and have done the ninety-day summer retreat within that assembly, you have already had the Way of the summer retreat genuinely Transmitted to you. Because I am of the genuine Transmission and you are doing the summer retreat while residing here together with me, it will be a true summer retreat. Because the summer retreat has been conferred face-to-face to Dharma heir after Dharma heir, starting with the summer retreats held when the Buddha was in the world, the countenance of both a Buddha and an Ancestor has been genuinely Transmitted to you right before your very eyes, and the body and mind of the Buddhas and Ancestors has personally awakened you to the promise of full enlightenment. This is why it is said that to encounter the summer retreat is to encounter Buddha, to experience the summer retreat is to experience Buddha, to practice the retreat is to practice Buddha, to hear the retreat is to hear Buddha, and to model oneself after the retreat is to learn Buddha.

In sum, it is the Teaching that all the Buddhas and Ancestors never went counter to the summer retreat, or beyond it. Thus, lordly humans, lordly Shakras, lordly Brahmas, and so on, should do the summer retreat and become monastics, even if it is only for a single summer, for that would be their encountering Buddha. Ordinary people, persons in lofty positions, and erudite 'dragons' should do the summer retreat and become monastics—be they male or female—even if only for a single period of ninety days, for this would be their encountering Buddha. To join the community of an Ancestor of the Buddha and do a ninety-day summer retreat is to encounter Buddha forthwith. It is your good fortune that, before the dewdrop of your life has fallen, you have already done one summer's retreat, be it as an ordinary lay person or as someone in a lofty position, so that you are now someone who has exchanged your skin and flesh, bones and marrow for the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Because the Buddhas and Ancestors come and do the retreat through us, each person's practice of the retreat is the retreat's practicing each of us. Because this is the way things are, those who have done the retreat are described simply as 'a thousand Buddhas and myriad Ancestors'. If you were to ask why, the reason is because the retreat is the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow, conscious mind and physical body of those who are Ancestors of Buddha. It is the Crown of their head and their Eye, it is their Fist and their Nose, it is their Buddha Nature fully perfected, it is their hossu* and traveling staff,* it is their lacquered, ceremonial bamboo sword and their meditation cushion. A summer retreat is not something brought forth as newly made. At the same time, it is not something that is merely making use of something old.

> The World-honored One once addressed the Bodhisattva Whose Enlightenment is Fully Perfected, along with the great assembly and all sentient beings, saying, "When the summer begins and you go into retreat for the three months of the rainy season, you should let the immaculate bodhisattvas stop and abide with you in your sanctuary. In your hearts, you should stay clear of those who merely come to listen but do not train, because the community of disciples is not a sometimes thing. Upon arriving for the opening day of the summer retreat, you should say something like the following before the Buddha or His image, 'I, the monk or lay person So-and-so, being seated in the vehicle of bodhisattvahood, will cultivate tranquility and freedom from my defiling passions so that I too may enter the Truth of Immaculacy and abide therein. I take the great Fully Perfected Enlightenment to be my true monastery and sanctuary, with my body and mind, equally, both dwelling peacefully within the spiritual knowledge of Buddha Nature. Because the True Nature of nirvana is without ties or attachments to anything, I now pray respectfully that I may not rely solely on listening to the voicing of the Dharma, but may spend this three-month retreat with the Tathagatas of all the ten quarters and with the great bodhisattvas. Also, for the sake of the Great Cause for which we cultivate the supreme and wondrous awakening of a bodhisattva, I will not let myself be distracted from the purpose of the retreat through entanglements with my fellow trainees.' O My fine disciples, I call this the dwelling at ease which a bodhisattva displays during a summer retreat."

Thus, whenever the monks and laity arrive for the three months of the retreat, they put into practice the Important Matter of the supreme and wondrous enlightenment of the bodhisattvas. Keep in mind that male and female lay trainees can also do the retreat. The place of this retreat is great, fully perfected enlightenment. This being so, Jetavana Park and the Divine Vulture Peak are both temples of the Tathagata's great fully perfected enlightenment. You should carefully listen to, and take to heart, the World-honored One's teaching that the Tathagatas and great bodhisattvas in all ten quarters did the practice and training of the three months' summer retreat.

> Once when the World-honored One was doing the ninety-day summer retreat somewhere, on the final day, when the ceremony of

> public repentance was held,[19] Manjushri suddenly appeared in the assembly, whereupon Makakashō asked him, "Where did you do your retreat this summer?" Manjushri replied, "This summer I did the retreat in three other places." At this, Makakashō assembled the community, intending to have Manjushri expelled by striking the wooden fish.[20] But just as he had raised the hammer to strike the wooden fish, he suddenly saw innumerable Buddhist temples appearing. He could see that there was a Buddha with a Manjushri at each place and a Makakashō at each place, his hand raising a hammer to expel Manjushri, whereupon the World-honored One spoke to Makakashō, saying, "Which Manjushri do you wish to expel now?" Makakashō was immediately dumbfounded.[21]

Meditation Master Engo, in commenting on this account, once said the following:

> If a bell is not struck, it does not ring; if a drum is not struck, it does not resound. Makakashō had already grasped the essential function of a summer retreat; Manjushri had rid himself of all duality by means of his doing his meditation throughout the ten quarters. This very moment in the story is an excellent one, for it expounds the functioning of the Buddha's Teaching. How regrettable to have missed such a move! As our dear Master Shakyamuni was about to say, 'Which of the Manjushris do you wish to expel now?' just imagine, what if Makakashō, right off, had given the fish a good whack! What mass annihilation would he have then created?

Meditation Master Engo added a verse to this commentary of his:

> *A great elephant does not play about in the narrow path*
> *that a rabbit makes,*
> *And what could a little bird know of a great wild swan?*[22]

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19. This is the ceremony where the participants ask their fellow trainees to have compassion on them for their poor training during the retreat.

20. The wooden fish is a wooden gong in the shape of a fish. It traditionally hangs just outside the Meditation Hall. Regulations for monks stipulate that a monastic must do the summer retreat in only one place. Breaking this regulation is considered a serious enough infraction to entail expulsion from the monastic Sangha.

21. Quoted from the *Great Far-reaching Scripture That is a Veritable Treasure Chest*.

22. 'A great elephant' is an allusion to Manjushri. 'A great wild swan' is a reference to Makakashō.

It was just as if Makakashō had created a new way of putting the Matter whilst staying within the rules and regulations;
It was just as if Manjushri had grabbed a flying arrow within his teeth, having already broken the target.
The whole universe is one with Manjushri;
The whole universe is one with Makakashō.
Face-to-face, each is solemn in his authority.
Makakashō raised his hammer, but in which place will he punish Manjushri?
Manjushri did It with one fine prick of his needle;
Makakashō s ascetic practices rid him of all hindrances.

So, the World-honored One's doing the summer retreat in one place is equivalent to Manjushri's doing it in three places, and neither is not doing the summer retreat. If someone is not doing the retreat, then such a one is not a Buddha or a bodhisattva. There is no account of any offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors not doing a summer retreat. You should realize that those who do a summer retreat are offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Doing a summer retreat is the body and mind of the Buddhas and Ancestors. It is the Eye of the Buddhas and Ancestors, the very life of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Those who have not done a summer retreat are not the offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors: they are neither a Buddha nor an Ancestor. We now have Buddhas and bodhisattvas, be They as humble as clay and wood, as precious as silk and gold, or as wondrous as the seven precious jewels.* All of Them have performed the retreat of sitting in meditation through the three months of the summer. This is the ancient custom of abiding within, and maintaining, the Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. In short, those who reside within the house of the Buddhas and Ancestors must, by all means, do the practice of sitting in retreat for the three months of a summer.

Delivered to the assembly at Daibutsu-ji Temple in Echizen Province, on the thirteenth day of the sixth month, during the summer retreat in the third year of the Kangen era (July 8, 1245).

Copied by me in the same province at Shinzenkō-ji Temple in Nakahama on the twentieth day of the fifth month, during the summer retreat in the second year of the Kōan era (June 30, 1278).

Giun

78

On Reading the Minds and Hearts of Others

(Tashintsū)

Translator's Introduction: This discourse is Dogen's reworking of his commentary on a section in Discourse 18: On 'The Mind Cannot Be Grasped' (*Shin Fukatoku)* concerning the encounter between the National Teacher Echū and a Tripitaka Master named Daini. 'National Teacher' is a Chinese imperial title often posthumously conferred upon a monk whose devotion to spiritual life was exemplary. Such a monk customarily served as the emperor's personal spiritual advisor. 'Tripitaka Master' is a secular title which might be comparable to the present-day academic 'Professor of Buddhology'; it does not imply that the person was necessarily a monk or even a practicing Buddhist.

National Teacher Echū of the Temple of Luminous Residence in the Western Capital was a man from Chuchi in the Yüeh-chou District. His family name was Zen. After having received the Mind seal,* he went to reside on Mount Poyai in Tangtsu Valley in the Nang-yan District. For forty years he did not go out from the monastery's gate, yet his reputation for practicing the Way was well-known throughout the country, not only in the towns and villages but also in the imperial court. In the second year of the Chinese Shang-yüan era (761 C.E.), Emperor Su-tsung of the T'ang dynasty privately dispatched his messenger, Sun Ch'ao-chin, to convey to the monk an invitation, summoning him to come to the capital. The emperor attended on the monk with all the courtesies due a Master, and had him take up residence in the Western Meditation Cloister of the Temple of a Thousand Blessings. When Emperor T'ai-tsung ascended to the throne after Su-tsung, he too sent his messenger to the monk, and now had him sequestered in the Temple of Luminous Residence. During his sixteen-year stay there, Echū gave voice to the Dharma in accordance with the capabilities of his audience. Then, one day, a person arrived at the capital from India, calling himself Tripitaka Master Daini. He claimed that he possessed the Eye that is keen enough to read people's

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* See *Glossary.*

minds. The emperor summoned the National Teacher Echū to test this person. No sooner had the Tripitaka Master caught sight of the National Teacher than he did a full prostration and then stood to the left of the National Teacher.

The National Teacher asked him, "Do you have the ability to read minds?"

The Tripitaka Master answered, "I would not dare to make such a claim."

The National Teacher then said, "You, say! Where is the old monk right now?"[1]

The Tripitaka Master replied, "The reverend monk is indeed the teacher of this nation, so why does he go to the Western River and watch people racing about in their boats?"[2]

The National Teacher then asked a second time, "You, say! Where is the old monk right now?"

The Tripitaka Master replied, "The reverend monk is the teacher of this nation, so why does he go to Tientsin Bridge and watch people playing with their pet monkeys?"[3]

The National Teacher asked a third time, "You, say! Where is the old monk right now?"

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1. 'The old monk' is an ambiguous term. On the one hand, it is a conventionally humble way for older senior monastics to refer to themselves, which is how the Tripitaka Master would have understood it. On the other hand, as 'the Old Monk', it can be understood as the National Teacher referring to his Buddha Nature, something which the Tripitaka Master would not have picked up on. In the latter sense, what the National Teacher asked could also be taken to mean, "Where is your Buddha Nature?"

2. The Western River flows through the Western Paradise. The Tripitaka Master is saying, in effect, "Why do you, who are so saintly that you are already in the Western Paradise, bother to pay any attention to us ordinary people who are engaged in worldly, competitive pursuits?"

3. 'Tientsin Bridge' literally means 'the bridge that leads into the Harbor of Heaven'. The Tripitaka Master is saying, in effect, "Why do you, who are standing on the very Bridge of Heaven, concern yourself with us worldly people who are preoccupied with playing around with our everyday minds?" Both this and the Tripitaka Master's previous statement are offering seemingly flattering but spiritually meaningless remarks in response to the National Teacher's deeply spiritual question, all the while still hinting that he could, indeed, read the minds of others.

Although the Tripitaka Master remained there for quite a long time, he did not know what to say.

The National Teacher said, "O you wild fox spirit, where is your ability to read minds now?"

The Tripitaka Master still had no response.[4]

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Concerning this story, there was a monk who once asked Jōshū, "Why didn't the Tripitaka Master see where the National Teacher was the third time?" Jōshū replied, "He did not see where the National Teacher was because he was right on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose."

Also, there was a monk who once asked Gensha Shibi, "Since the National Teacher was already right on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose, why didn't he see him?" Shibi replied, "Simply because he was just much too close."

A monk once asked Kyōzan, "Why didn't the Tripitaka Master see the whereabouts of the National Teacher the third time, since he was there a rather long time?" Kyōzan replied, "The first two times, the National Teacher's mind was in the realm of externals. He then entered the meditative state of delight in the Self, so the Tripitaka Master was unable to perceive his whereabouts."

Kaie Shutan once said, "If the National Teacher was right on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose, why was he having such difficulty seeing it? After all, he did not recognize that the National Teacher was right inside the Tripitaka Master's Eye."

Also, as if rebuking the Tripitaka Master, Shibi once remarked, "You, say! Did you even see It the first two times?" About this, Setchō Jūken once said, "Seen through the first time! Seen through the second time!"

From ancient times, there have been many senior monks who have commented on or tried to explain this story concerning National Teacher Echū's

4. Evidently, the Tripitaka Master realized that what he was being asked for required something beyond 'parlor Zen' responses, but because he did not know what the True Mind of the National Teacher was, he was unable to reply. 'A wild fox spirit' here refers to a clever and manipulative person who gives teachings that are false and misleading.

testing of Tripitaka Master Daini, but these five venerable Fists are noteworthy.[5] And though I do not deny the insight and appropriateness of the remarks of these five esteemed veteran Masters, there are several points where the commentators have not spotted the way that the National Teacher was behaving. If we ask why this is, it is because all concerned, in both the past and present, have been of the opinion that the first two times the Tripitaka Master correctly knew where the National Teacher was residing. This was the common error of our Ancestors and, as present-day trainees, you need to recognize it.

Now there are two reasons why I have doubts about these five esteemed veteran Masters. First, they did not recognize the underlying intention in the National Teacher's testing of the Tripitaka Master. Second, they did not appreciate the body and mind of the National Teacher.

To begin with, I have said that they did not appreciate the body and mind of the National Teacher because the first time the National Teacher said, "You, say! Where is the old monk right now?" his underlying intention was to test whether the Tripitaka Master had the Eye to see and hear the Buddha Dharma; he wished to test whether the Tripitaka Master had the ability to read the minds and hearts of others, which is part of the Buddha Dharma. At that moment, if the Tripitaka Master had been equipped with the Buddha Dharma, then when asked, "You, say! Where is the old monk right now?" he would have been in possession of a path for going beyond the discriminatory, of an expedient means for putting the Matter* in his own personal way. The National Teacher's saying "Where is the old monk right now?" is equivalent to asking, "What <u>is</u> the Old Monk?" His question, "Where is the Old Monk right now?" is his asking, "What occasion is 'right now?'" His saying, "Where is…" is his asserting "This is the place where the What resides." It has the underlying principle of referring to 'the What' as 'an old monk'. The National Teacher is not the whole of what the Old Monk is, but the Old Monk is certainly the National Teacher's Fist. Even though Tripitaka Master Daini had come from India, he did not know the heart of this, for he had not learned what the Buddha Dharma is and had just vainly studied the paths of non-Buddhists and those of the two Lower Courses.*

The National Teacher then asked a second time, "You, say! Where is the old monk right now?" And here, again, the Tripitaka Master gave a pointless reply. Again the National Teacher asked, "You, say! Where is the old monk right now?" This third time, even though the Tripitaka Master took a considerable amount of

5. When referring to a Master, the term 'Fist' refers to someone who has gone beyond conceptualizing and verbalizing in order to express the Buddha Dharma.

time, he was in a daze and gave no respectful reply. The National Teacher now rebuked the Tripitaka Master, saying, "O you wild fox spirit, where is your ability to read minds now?" Even though the Tripitaka Master was rebuked in this way, he was without a respectful reply and had no way out of his predicament.

However, in regard to the National Teacher rebuking the Tripitaka Master, all of the five Ancestors were of the opinion that the latter knew the whereabouts of the National Teacher the first two times and only failed to see it the third time, and because he did not see it then, he was rebuked by the National Teacher. This is a huge mistake. The National Teacher's rebuke of the Tripitaka Master was, from the first, a rebuke for not having encountered the Buddha Dharma even in his dreams. He does not rebuke him, as some have thought, for not having understood the third time even though having understood the first two times. He rebukes him for having styled himself as one who knew how to read minds when he did not know how to read minds at all.

The National Teacher is, first off, testing the Tripitaka Master by asking him, in effect, whether the ability to read minds exists within the Buddha Dharma. By his answering, "I would not dare to make such a claim," he implies that it does exist. After that, the National Teacher is apparently of a mind that thinks, "If we say that the ability to read minds exists in the Buddha Dharma and if we obtain the ability to read minds during our practice of the Buddha Dharma, then things are as they should be, but if what is expressed by words is not a full offering of the Teaching, then it cannot be the Buddha Dharma." Even if the Tripitaka Master was at a point where he could have managed to express a small bit of the Teaching the third time, if it was anything like the first two times, it would not be a genuine expression through words and the National Teacher should rebuke him on principle. In asking his question three times, the National Teacher was trying to see again and again whether the Tripitaka Master could understand the question, which is why he asked his question three times.

Second, none of the ancient worthies could fully appreciate the Body and Mind of the National Teacher. What I have called 'the Body and Mind of the National Teacher' is something that is beyond the reach of scholastic teachers of Scriptures like the Tripitaka Master, who could not see It, much less comprehend It. Among the bodhisattvas,* even the 'thrice wise and ten times saintly'* have not reached It, nor is It something that those who will be reborn as Buddhas have clarified. Scholars who are students of Scriptures are ordinary, unenlightened people, so how could they possibly comprehend the National Teacher's Whole Being? By all means, you need to be certain about this underlying principle. To say that the Body and Mind of the National Teacher can be known or seen by a scholar of Scriptures is to insult the Buddha Dharma. To believe that his Body and Mind

are on a par with those of scholarly commentators on Scriptures is the utmost height of lunacy. Do not teach yourself that someone who may be able to read the worldly intentions of others must surely know where the National Teacher is existing.

Now and again, as a cultural custom, there have been those in India who have succeeded in developing the ability to read minds. But I have never heard an example of anyone attaining the ability to read minds without, at the same time, relying on the Mind that has given rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood and without relying on the Right Views of the Greater Course.* A person like this, after attaining the ability to read minds, has genuinely mastered the Buddha Dharma. On the other hand, if an ordinary lay person has attained the ability to read minds, and then later gives rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood and therefore undertakes the training and practice, that person can, quite naturally, realize enlightenment in the Buddha's Way. If one could comprehend the Buddha's Way merely by having attained the ability to read the minds of others, then all the saintly ones of the past would have, first off, trained themselves to read the minds of others and then used that ability to realize the fruits of Buddhahood. But this has yet to be the case, even though thousands of Buddhas and myriad Ancestors have come into the world. I must ask, if someone has not already come to know the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors, what is one to do, for such a person is of no use to the Way of the Buddhas? Someone who has attained only the ability to read minds and some ordinary, everyday person who cannot read minds are surely equals. When it comes to maintaining and relying upon one's Buddha Nature, someone who can read minds and some ordinary, everyday person may well be the same.

You who are studying what Buddha is must never think that those who possess the five or six spiritual abilities—be they non-Buddhists or those of the two Lesser Courses—are in any way superior to an ordinary, everyday person. There is simply the Mind that seeks the Way—the Mind of one who is truly studying the Buddha's Teaching—which will surpass the five or six spiritual abilities, just as the song of the kalavinka bird, even in its egg, surpasses that of all other birds. Furthermore, what is called in India 'the ability to read the minds of others' should be called 'the ability to know the concerns of others'. Even though one with such an ability may have some affinity with the thoughts and feelings that arise in someone else, they are so vague as to be laughable. What is more, Mind is not necessarily thoughts and feelings, nor are thoughts and feelings necessarily what Mind is. When one's mind becomes entangled with thoughts and things, one cannot know how to read the minds of others, and when thoughts and things become entangled in the mind, that mind cannot know how to read the thoughts of others.

Thus, the five or six abilities of India cannot come up to mowing down weeds and tending the fields in this country of ours. Such abilities are ultimately of no use. Accordingly, all the previous virtuous ones in China and the lands east of India had no taste for practicing the five or six abilities, because they had no need for them. Even a foot-wide jewel may still have some value, but there is no value in the five or six abilities. Even a foot-wide jewel is not the Treasure, but every inch of time is precious. How could anyone who attaches any importance to moments of time waste them by dabbling with the five and six abilities? In short, you need to be decisive in affirming the principle that the ability to read the mind of another is outside the bounds of the wise discernment of a Buddha. Also, all five of the veteran Masters were greatly mistaken in having thought that the Tripitaka Master knew the whereabouts of the National Teacher the first two times. The National Teacher was an Ancestor of the Buddha, whereas the Tripitaka Master was an ordinary, everyday person, so how can anyone possibly take him to be the National Teacher's equal in any spiritual discussion?

First off, the National Teacher is saying, "You, say! Where is the Old Monk right now?" There is nothing that is hidden in this question; what he said clearly expresses It. The Tripitaka Master was not at fault in that he did not recognize this, but it was a serious mistake that the five veteran Masters did not pick up on this and failed to see it. The National Teacher had already said, "You, say! Where is the Old Monk right now?" He did not say, "You, say! Where is the old monk's mind now?" nor did he say, "Where are the old monk's thoughts now?" Rather, what he said is something which is vital to hear, and recognize, and inquire into. But the veteran monks neither recognized nor saw it. They did not hear or see what the National Teacher was saying. As a result, they did not know what the Body and Mind of the National Teacher was. One who has a way of explaining what a National Teacher is saying is called a National Teacher. If someone does not have a way of putting It, such a person cannot be a teacher of one's nation. What is more, a person like this will not know that the Body and Mind of the National Teacher is beyond being something great or something mediocre, beyond being oneself or being someone else. It is as if this person had completely forgotten that he had a Crown upon his head or that he had a Nose on his face. Since the National Teacher had no break from his daily practice, how could he possibly have in mind the goal of becoming a Buddha! Therefore, we should not await our meeting up with him, waiting to meet a 'Buddha'.

The National Teacher already has the Body and Mind of a Buddha, but we cannot take measure of It by employing spiritual abilities or by realizing what It is through practice, nor can we be prepared to say what It is by suppressing thought or by being oblivious to karmic* conditions, for It is not something that can be

successfully talked about or not talked about. The National Teacher is not one who possesses a Buddha Nature, and he is not one who lacks Buddha Nature, and he is not one whose being is vast space. The Body and Mind of such a National Teacher is something that is completely unknown. In our lineage from Daikan Enō of Sōkei on down, apart from Seigen and Nangaku, only National Teacher Echū is such an Ancestor of the Buddha.

I now wish to test each of the five veteran Masters and will attempt to go them one better.

Jōshū said that the Tripitaka Master did not see where the National Teacher was because he was right on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose. This remark lacks validity. How could the National Teacher possibly be right on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose when the latter still lacked a Nose?[6] If we grant that the Tripitaka Master did have a Nose, then the National Teacher would have had a spiritual encounter with him. Even if we grant that the National Teacher had a spiritual encounter with the Tripitaka Master, this would simply be one Nose facing one Nose but, to put it simply, the Tripitaka Master was unable to have a mutual encounter with the National Teacher.

Shibi said that it was simply because he was just much too close. The phrase, 'being much too close', may have some truth to it, but it still does not hit the mark. Just what is this 'being much too close'? Shibi may well have still not known what 'being much too close' means, for he may not have encountered being much too close. If you were to ask why, it is because he only knew that a mutual encounter is never too close. He did not know that a mutual encounter <u>is</u> being ever too close. We can say that when it comes to the Buddha Dharma, he was the farthest of the far. If we say that being ever too close only applies to the third time, then it must be that there was a being ever too close which existed before the first two times. I should like to ask Shibi at this time, "What are you calling 'being too close'? Do you call it a Fist? Do you call it the Eye?" In the future, don't you trainees go around saying that nothing <u>you</u> see is ever too close!

Kyōzan said that the first two times the National Teacher's mind was in the realm of externals, and that he then entered the meditative state of delight in the Self so that the Tripitaka Master was unable to perceive his whereabouts. While you were living in China, Kyōzan, you were honored in India as having the reputation of a lesser Shakyamuni, but even so, what you are saying now contains a great error. The mind that is in the realm of externals and the mind that enters the meditative state of delight in the Self are not two different minds. Therefore, you

6. That is, he still lacked an awakened Buddha Nature.

should not say that the Tripitaka Master is unaware the third time because the mind in the realm of externals and the mind taking delight in the Self are different. So, even though you come up with a reason based upon a difference between taking delight in the Self and being in the realm of externals, that assertion of yours is still not a true assertion. Were you to say that when someone enters the meditative state of taking delight in the Self, others cannot 'see' that person, then taking delight in the Self could not realize taking delight in the Self, and there could be no practice that is synonymous with enlightenment.

Kyōzan, if you gathered that the Tripitaka Master truly saw the whereabouts of the National Teacher the first two times, then you are not yet one of those who has learned what Buddha is. In short, it was not just the third time that the Tripitaka Master Daini failed to see the whereabouts of the National Teacher, he also failed to see it the first two times as well. And if your understanding was as I have just stated it, then I would have to say that not only did the Tripitaka Master not know the whereabouts of the National Teacher, but you too, Kyōzan, did not know the whereabouts of the National Teacher. Right now I would like to ask Kyōzan, "Where is the National Teacher at this very moment?" And if, at this time, you should deign to open your mouth, I would let out such a yell!

Shibi, as a reproach to the Tripitaka Master, questioned whether he had even seen the National Teacher the first two times. Now this one statement, "Had you even seen the National Teacher the first two times?" sounds as if he is saying what needs to be said. But Shibi needs to study his own words. This sentence is fine as fine goes, but if we just look at it, it is as if he was saying, "He saw and he didn't see." Therefore, it is not accurate. Upon hearing this, Setchō Jūken said, "Seen through the first time! Seen through the second time!" When we see Shibi's words as true, we should also say this, but when we do not see Shibi's words as true, we should not say this.

Kaie Shutan said, "If the National Teacher was right on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose, why was the latter having such difficulty seeing it? After all, he did not recognize that the National Teacher was right inside the Tripitaka Master's Eye." This statement also only deals with the third time. He did not reprimand the Tripitaka Master, as he should have, for failing to see the first two times, so how could he possibly recognize that the National Teacher was on the tip of the Tripitaka Master's nose or inside his Eye? If he talks like this, we can say that he has not yet heard what the National Teacher is saying, for the Tripitaka Master did not have the Nose or the Eye for it. But even should the Tripitaka Master have maintained and relied upon an Eye and a Nose of his own, if the National Teacher penetrated that Nose and Eye, both the Tripitaka Master's Nose and Eye would immediately have been ripped open. Once they had been ripped

open, they would not be the niches and baskets that a National Teacher needs to stay in.[7]

None of the five veteran monks really knew the National Teacher. He was the Old Buddha of his generation and the Tathagata for his world. He had clarified the Matter and had received the genuine Transmission of the Buddha's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. And he was undoubtedly preserving, and relying upon, his Eye, which was as black as a nut from a bo-tree.[8] He genuinely experienced the Transmission within his own Buddha Nature and he genuinely Transmitted It to the Buddha Nature of others. He was as a fellow trainee with Shakyamuni Buddha and, at the same time, he thoroughly explored the Matter with the Seven Buddhas.* And he acted like a fellow trainee with all the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds. He awoke to the Way that came before the Lord of Emptiness,* and awoke to the Way that came after the Lord of Emptiness, and awoke to the Way as a fellow trainee at the very time of the Buddha Who is the Lord of Emptiness. Right from the start, the National Teacher treated our ordinary, everyday world of suffering as his native land, and at the same time, this world of suffering was not necessarily within his Dharma world or within the whole of his universe in all ten directions. And Shakyamuni, as Lord of this world of suffering, never usurped or hindered the National Teacher's native land, which is just like each of the former and latter Buddhas and Ancestors who had innumerable awakenings to the Truth, but without interfering with or hindering each other's experience. And it is like this because the awakening to the Truth by former and latter Buddhas and Ancestors was unique to each of Them based on how it is that They awoke to the Truth.

Based on the evidence that Tripitaka Master Daini did not understand the National Teacher, the underlying principle should be clearly evident that folks like the shravakas* and pratyekabuddhas* of the Lesser Two Courses do not recognize even the periphery of Buddhahood. You should clarify through your training the National Teacher's intention in censuring the Tripitaka Master. That is, if the National Teacher had reprimanded him for knowing his whereabouts the first two times, and then reprimanded him for not knowing it the third time, this would lack

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7. That is, if the Eye of the Tripitaka Master were to open, even though he would then be one who had awakened to the Truth, the National Teacher, who was already more spiritually advanced, would not need to depend on the Eye and Nose of the Tripitaka Master to accurately point out the Old Monk's whereabouts.

8. The black nut from the bo-tree resembles the pupil of an eye. The reference is to the Eye, which unlike ordinary eyes does not function as one of the thieving sensory organs.

validity. To know two thirds is to know the whole. So if it were this way, the National Teacher should not have reprimanded him. If he is reprimanded, it is not for being ignorant of the whole, but because the Tripitaka Master's attitude was insulting to the National Teacher.[9] If the latter had reprimanded the Tripitaka Master simply for failing to know the third time, who could trust the National Teacher's judgment? On the grounds of the Tripitaka Master knowing the first two times, the Tripitaka Master would be justified in reprimanding the National Teacher.

The National Teacher's intent in censuring the Tripitaka Master is as follows: He reprimands him because, right from the start, he failed all three times to recognize where the National Teacher was, what he was thinking, and what his Body and Mind were. He reprimands him for never having encountered or heard the Buddha Dharma, much less having studied It. Because this was the National Teacher's purpose, from the first time through the third, he asked his question using the same words. The first time the Tripitaka Master answered, "The reverend monk is indeed the teacher of this nation, so why does he go to the Western River and watch people racing about in their boats?" Spoken to in this way, the National Teacher did not reply, "Yes, Tripitaka Master, you have truly grasped the Old Monk's whereabouts." He simply repeated his question two more times. For several centuries since the time of the National Teacher, monks of long standing in all quarters, failing to grasp and clarify this point, have irresponsibly brought forth their commentaries and expounded their theories. The comments made by these individuals of the past lack the original intent of the National Teacher, and none accords with the Buddha Dharma. How sad that these veteran monks of the past have tripped up over this!

Now, if we say that, within the Buddha Dharma, there is the ability to see into someone's mind, then there must surely be an ability to see into someone's body, an ability to see into someone's Fist, and an ability to see into someone's Eye. If that is the way things are, then we ought to have the ability to see into our own mind and our own body. In that things are already like this, you certainly must have the ability to use your own mind right at this very moment to see into your own mind. To state more clearly what is being said, you undoubtedly have the ability to see into the minds of others, for this arises spontaneously from your own mind.

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9. The Tripitaka Master's two responses were insulting because, despite his feigning humility and his using flowery language, he is actually accusing the National Teacher of engaging in behavior that is improper for a monk.

Let me ask you right now: which is better, to use your ability in order to see into the minds of others or to use it to see into your own mind? Answer! Quick! Quick! Putting this aside just for the moment, let me say that Bodhidharma's remark, "You have gotten what my Marrow is," is what 'seeing into the Mind of another' is all about.

Delivered to the assembly at Daibutsu-ji Temple in Echizen Province on the fourth day of the seventh lunar month in the third year of the Kangen era (July 28, 1245).

79

On 'The King Requests Something from Sindh'

(Ō Saku Sendaba)

Translator's Introduction: The term *sendaba* (Skt. *saindava*), 'something from Sindh', refers to products from the Indus River area, which were held in great esteem throughout India. Thus, asking for something from Sindh is equivalent to asking for the very best someone can offer that is appropriate to the situation. Dōgen views such acts of asking by one and offering by another as a model for the Master-disciple relationship.

> *Being possessed of words is having gone beyond words,*
> *As a wisteria vine is to a tree:*
> *The one feeds a donkey and the other feeds a horse,*
> *The one dives into water and the other passes through clouds.*[1]

Because this is the way matters already are, in the *Great Scripture on the Buddha's Parinirvana,* the World-honored One is quoted as saying the following:

> For instance, it is like the great king who would bid his ministers supply him with something from Sindh. The single term 'something from Sindh' had four references. The first was to salt, the second was to a goblet, the third was to water, and the fourth was to a horse. These four goods were alike in having one and the same term of reference. Astute ministers were quite familiar with this term. At the king's bath time, should he ask for something from Sindh, they would accordingly offer him water. At the king's mealtime, should he

1. This poem describes various aspects of the Master-disciple relationship. To paraphrase the poem on one level, just as a tree supports a wisteria vine, so the Master's having gone beyond words supports his verbal teaching. Hence, there are times when the Master uses words and times when he does not. The use of verbal instruction nourishes those who are plodding along nicely, doing their training, 'the donkeys' who have not yet awakened, whereas those who have awakened are like horses who do not need words but, upon seeing only the shadow of the trainer's riding crop, know which way to go. As a result, the trainee who is like a donkey is led to dive into the water of training and practice, whereas the one who is like a horse flies up, penetrating anything that obscures his view of the unbounded sky, which corresponds to That which he has awakened to.

> ask for something from Sindh, they would accordingly offer him salt. When the king had finished eating and wished for something to drink, should he ask for something from Sindh, they would accordingly offer him a goblet. Should the king wish to make an excursion, he would ask for something from Sindh, and they would accordingly offer him a horse. In this way astute ministers understood well the king's four hidden meanings.

The sayings, "The king asked them for something from Sindh" and "The ministers offered him something from Sindh," have come to us from the distant past. They have been passed down to us just as the Eye of the Dharma has. Because the World-honored One had inevitably taken them up as a topic for the Dharma, His descendants have often taken them up too. I suspect that those who have become accustomed to being in step with the World-honored One make 'something from Sindh' their way of treading the Path. If their practice is not in step with that of the World-honored One, they should buy straw sandals and go in search of a Master, for such trainees need but advance one step in that direction and they will get it right off. The 'something from Sindh' that was already within the house of the Buddhas and Ancestors has quietly leaked out, so that 'something from Sindh' is to be found within the households of great kings.

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The Old Buddha Wanshi of Mount Tendō in the Great Sung Chinese prefecture of Ch'ing-yüan, in addressing his assembly in the Lecture Hall, once said the following:

> To begin with, a monk asked Jōshū, "When a king asks for something from Sindh, what is it?"
>
> Jōshū bowed, his hands in shashu.*
>
> Setchō, picking up on this, has commented, "When the one asked for salt, the other offered him a horse."

Master Wanshi went on to say:

> A hundred years ago, Setchō was an excellent trainer of disciples. And Jōshū was an Old Buddha who lived to be a hundred and twenty. If Jōshū is right, then Setchō is simply otherwise; if

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* See *Glossary.*

Setchō is right, then Jōshū is simply otherwise.[2] Now, at this very moment, say! What ultimately is It? I, Wanshi, cannot avoid adding a comment to this, for if you are a hair short of It, you have missed It by ten thousand miles.

To simply comprehend my words is to beat about in the grass and thereby startle some snake
And not to comprehend them is to burn funeral money and thereby attract some demon.
Old Gutei showed no preferences among his uncultivated fields,
He just reached out and took whichever one came to hand.[3]

When the Old Buddha who was my former Master was giving Teaching in the Lecture Hall, he would customarily refer to 'my Old Buddha Wanshi'. At the same time, only the Old Buddha who was my late master personally encountered the Old Buddha Wanshi as an Old Buddha. In Wanshi's time, there was a certain Sōkō, known as Meditation Master Daie of Mount Kinzan, who was supposed to have been a distant descendant of Nangaku. The whole realm of Great Sung China apparently thought Daie to be at least the equal of Wanshi, and some even thought him to surpass Wanshi as 'such a person'.* This error had arisen because, in that their eyes for the Way were not yet clear, both monks and laity in Great Sung China were negligent in their learning, they lacked clarity in recognizing what people were, and they were weak in knowledge of themselves.

In what Wanshi was recommending there was a genuine giving rise to the will to train. You need to explore through your training the principle of the Old Buddha Jōshū's bowing with hands in shashu. At the very moment of his doing it,

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2. Although the conventional expectation of what would follow the statement 'if Jōshū is right' would be that 'Setchō is therefore wrong', Wanshi does not say that Setchō is wrong, but asserts that what he is talking about is 'simply otherwise'. That is, each has expressed the whole of the Truth, hence the action by Jōshū and the statement by Setchō in no way contradict or stand against each other.

3. To paraphrase this poem, to content oneself with an intellectual understanding of Wanshi's Teaching is to beat around in the bushes and thereby run the risk of meeting up with something poisonous to one's training. On the other hand, not to have a clue as to what that Teaching is about is like mechanically going through the ritual of burning 'hell money' at a funeral only to attract devilish obstructions to one's training. When the great Meditation Master Gutei trained his disciples, he showed no preferences among them but would work with whichever disciple happened to come nearest to hand.

was this the king asking for something from Sindh? Or was it the offering of something from Sindh? You need to explore through your training the import of Setchō's saying, "When the one asked for salt, the other offered him a horse." Both 'asking for salt' and 'offering a horse' together are the king's asking for something from Sindh and the minister's offering something from Sindh. It is the World-honored One asking for something from Sindh and Makakashō's face breaking out into a smile. The First Chinese Ancestor asked for something from Sindh and his four disciples offered him a horse, salt, water, and a goblet. You need to learn that, when a horse, salt, water, and a goblet from Sindh are asked for, this is the pivotal point for the offering of a horse and the offering of water.

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> One day, Nansen saw Tō Impō coming towards him and, pointing at a jar, said to him, "The jar is a vessel and there is water inside the jar. Without disturbing the vessel, please fetch me the water."
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> Accordingly, Impō fetched the water in the jar and, turning to face Nansen, poured it over Nansen's head. Nansen remained still.

Actually, in Nansen's asking for water, the sea dried up to its very bottom; in Impō's offering a vessel, the jar leaked out its contents which sank into a pond. Even though this is the way things were, you need to explore through your training that there was Water in the vessel and a Vessel in the water. Impō had not yet done anything to disturb the Water, nor had he yet done anything to disturb the Vessel.

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> Great Master Kyōgen Chikan was once asked by a monk, "What in the world is this 'king asking for something from Sindh' all about?"
>
> Kyōgen replied, "Just come over here."
>
> The monk went over to him.
>
> Kyōgen said, "Your noodle-headed act could get someone killed!"

Now, let us ask, is the basis of Kyōgen's remark, "Come over here," his asking for something from Sindh or is it his offering something from Sindh? Please, I beg of you, try to answer! Was the monk's having gone over to him based on Kyōgen's asking for something or based on Kyōgen's offering something? Or was either of these even Kyōgen's original intention? If neither was his original intention, he could not have said, "Your noodle-headed act could get someone killed!" If either

was his original intention, such a noodle-headed act could not kill anyone. Even though one may say that what Kyōgen has expressed is the full force of a whole lifetime, he still did not escape the disintegration of his body and the loss of his life. He is, for instance, like the general of a defeated army who still talks about his military prowess. In sum, from the Crown of his head and from his Eye, Kyōgen gave voice to what is yellow and spoke of what is black, which is his most meticulous asking for, and offering of, something from Sindh.[4] Who can say that they do not understand the taking up of the traveling staff* and the raising of the hossu?* Even so, these are not the criteria of folks that play a *koto* with its bridge glued down.[5] Because these folks don't even know that they are playing a *koto* with its bridge glued down, they are beyond having such criteria.

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> One day, the World-honored One ascended the Dharma Seat. Manjushri,* having then rapped upon the signal block with his mallet, said, "When we clearly see what the Dharma of the Lord of Dharma is, the Dharma of the Lord of Dharma is just like this," whereupon, the World-honored One came down from His Dharma seat.

Meditation Master Setchō Jūken commented on this by saying:

> *As any skilled Master among the sacred ranks of those in the forest grove knew,*
> *"The Teaching of the Lord of Dharma is <u>not</u> just like this."*
> *If, in the Buddha's assembly, there had been any trainee from Sindh,*
> *Why would Manjushri possibly have needed to sound even one single clap?*

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4. In China, yellow and black are traditionally viewed as opposites or complements: the earth is yellow by day, the sky is black by night. In Chinese Buddhist texts, 'giving voice to what is yellow' is associated with the positive teaching of the Precepts and Buddhist training, whereas 'speaking of what is black' is associated with the pointing out of acts that are contrary to the Precepts and to training.

5. The *koto* is a traditional Japanese stringed musical instrument. The bridge of a *koto* needs to remain flexible and to 'give' according to the way it is being played; hence, to glue the bridge down would be analogous to holding onto rigid views.

Accordingly, Setchō is saying that if one clap is as though one's whole being is flawless, then whether the block has already been struck or has not yet been struck, it would be one's dropping off of 'being flawless'. If it were like this, then one clap would be something from Sindh. If there were already 'such a person', that one would be a trainee from Sindh who was among the sacred ranks within the forest grove. Hence, the Dharma of the Lord of Dharma is just like this. To make good use of all the hours of a day is to ask for something from Sindh. We should ask for the Fist and offer the Fist: we should ask for the hossu and offer the hossu.

Even so, of the so-called senior monks in all the various monasteries in Great Sung China, none have ever seen something from Sindh even in their dreams. Painful, oh how painful, that the Way of the Ancestors has so declined! Do not shirk from hard training and, beyond question, you <u>will</u> inherit the lifeline of the Buddhas and Ancestors. For instance, someone asks, "What <u>is</u> Buddha?" and the Master asserts, "Your very mind is Buddha!" What does this mean? Would this assertion not be 'something from Sindh'? You need to explore in detail through your training with your Master who it really is that says, "Your very mind is Buddha!" Would any of you know that it is striking, and being struck by, something from Sindh?

Given to the assembly at Daibutsu-ji Temple in Echizen Province on the twenty-second day of the tenth month in the third year of the Kangen era (November 12, 1245).

80

On Instructions for Monks in the Kitchen Hall

(Jikuin Mon)

Translator's Introduction: The text of this discourse would have been placed in the kitchen for the Chief Cook and the other kitchen monks to read and refer to.

When Hangyō Kōzen prepared the first published version of the *Shōbōgenzō* in 1690, he added this chapter, along with Discourse 1: A Discourse on Doing One's Utmost in Practicing the Way of the Buddhas (*Bendōwa*) and Discourse 5: On Conduct Appropriate for the Auxiliary Cloud Hall (*Jūundō Shiki*), to the other versions of the *Shōbōgenzō* that he found in Eihei-ji.

On the sixth day of the eighth lunar month in the fourth year of the Kangen era (September 17, 1246), I expounded on the following for the assembly, "The method of training for monks who are responsible for preparing meals is to have them make reverence their underlying principle." After the Tathagata's entering parinirvana, the Dharma has been accurately Transmitted from far off India and to China, and during that time, celestial beings have made spiritual offerings to the Buddhas and Their disciples. Rulers of nations have also made alms offerings of royal food to the Buddhas and Their disciples. In addition, the households of wealthy and ordinary lay folk have respectfully made food offerings, and there have even been laborers and servants who have done the same. These alms offerings were accompanied with deep respect and cordiality. Among persons in lofty positions, as well as among ordinary folk, were those who made offerings of food and other things in a most respectful way, accompanied with highly courteous bows and with the most polite forms of speech, because of the depth of their intentions. Now, even though we are deep within remote mountains, we should personally receive the authentic Transmission of polite acts and respectful words from those who serve in the Kitchen Hall of our temple, for this is how those in lofty positions, as well as ordinary folk, have pursued their study of the Buddha's Dharma.

For example, when speaking of the breakfast gruel, you should take the time to say, 'our revered gruel' or 'our morning gruel', but not just 'the gruel'.[1] When

1. 'Our revered gruel' and similar phrases are somewhat heavy-handed English translations. In Japanese, the respectful form for 'gruel' is made simply by adding the prefix 'o-' to the Chinese-derived word *shoku* to form *o-shoku*. The word for 'morning gruel' is *chōshoku*,

speaking of the midday meal, you should take the time to say ‘our revered midday meal’ or ‘our lunchtime’, but not just ‘lunch’. You should take the time to say, “Would you please prepare some white rice for me?” and not just, “Pound me some rice!” As to washing rice, you should take the time to say, “Would you please wash some rice for me?” and not spend your time saying, “Wash me some rice!” You should take the time to say, “Would you please select some vegetables for our stir-fry dish?” and not, “Get me some veggies!” You should take the time to say, “Would you please prepare a nice broth for our meal?” and not, “Make us some broth!” You should take the time to say, “Would you please prepare some nice hot soup for our meal?” and not, “Make us some soup!” You should take the time to say, “The lunchtime meal—or the morning gruel—has been prepared ever so nicely.”

Be sure to treat all the utensils used to prepare the midday meal and the morning gruel with similar respect. Disrespect invites calamity; it is never accompanied by anything meritorious.

While the midday meal and the breakfast gruel are being prepared, no one should breathe all over the rice and vegetables, or any other food items. Do not let the sleeve of your robe brush against even dry food items. If your hand has come in contact with your head or face, do not handle any utensils or food until you have washed it. From the time of sorting the rice until the cooking of it to make a broth, should you happen to scratch yourself, by all means you should wash your hands.

In places where the midday meal and the morning gruel are being prepared, you should recite lines from Buddhist Scriptures or passages spoken by the Ancestral Masters. Do not engage in worldly talk or use crude speech. As a principle, you should take the time to use polite word forms when speaking of such things as rice, meals, salt, and soy sauce. You should not use your time saying, “There’s rice,” or “There’s veggies.”

When senior monks and novices pass by the place where the midday meal or the morning gruel is being conducted, they should respectfully bow with hands in gassho.*

If there are any spilt vegetables or spilt rice, they should be made use of after the meal.[2]

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which again is a reading derived from the Chinese. Dōgen contrasts these with the colloquial Japanese word for gruel: *kayu*.

* See *Glossary*.

2. That is, fed to animals or used for compost.

To the extent that the morning or midday meals have not concluded, you should not intrude upon them.

You should take care to preserve the utensils used for preparing meals and not use them for other purposes. Do not let them be handled by lay folk who have come from home until they have washed their hands. Such foodstuffs as vegetables and fruit which have come from lay folk and which have not yet been cleansed should be rinsed, incensed, and left to dry by the fire, and then respectfully offered to the Three Treasures and to the monks of the assembly. In the mountain retreats and the temples of Great Sung China today, if lay folk bring such things as dumplings, dairy cakes, and steamed cakes, they should be reheated before being served to the monastic community. This will purify them. Do not serve them without reheating them.

These are but a few points among many. O you who are in charge of the Kitchen Hall, you need to understand their great import and put them into practice. Within all your myriad duties, do not act contrary to these standards.

These items are the lifeblood of the Buddhas and Ancestors and the Eye of patch-robed monks. Non-Buddhists know them not: celestial demons cannot endure them. Only the disciples of Buddha have been able to Transmit them. O you who are senior officers of the Kitchen Hall, discern them well and do not let them be lost!

Displayed here by Dōgen,
the Founding Monk of this temple.

I, as Master of Eihei-ji Temple, now address the Chief Officer: If it is already past noon when a donor makes an offering of cooked rice, you should keep it in storage until the next day. But if it is something like cakes, fruit, or some kind of gruel, or the like, even though it is already evening, serve it as a medicine meal for the assembly of the Buddhas and Ancestors.[3] And what is more, such a meal is an excellent trace left by those in Great Sung China who realized the True Way.

The Tathagata always permitted monks living in the Himalayas to wear underclothing. We on this mountain also permit such medicine during the times of snow.

Kigen, the Founding Monk of Eihei.[4]

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3. Traditionally, only two meals are served to the monastic community, one in the morning and another before noon. Because monks, particularly those who are ill or are engaged in heavy physical labor, may need more nourishment than these two meals provide, an evening meal may be offered as a form of ‘medicine’ to provide additional nourishment for the body.

4. Kigen was one of Dōgen’s names.

81

On Leaving Home Life Behind

(Shukke)

Translator's Introduction: The term *shukke*, 'leaving home life behind', has a double meaning. Figuratively, it refers to letting go of worldly values; literally, it refers to someone entering a monastery to become a monk.

Some of Dōgen's readers have taken this discourse as evidence that he had completely rejected the idea of lay discipleship. But if that were the case, it is difficult to explain why he would be giving this talk to his assembly of monastic disciples rather than to the relatively few lay disciples who were present at Eihei-ji. It seems more likely that some of his monks were having difficulties with the harshness of monastic training in such an isolated locale, and Dōgen was trying to get some starch into their backbones by insisting that only through sticking with their commitment to leave home life behind, in both senses of the term, and to live in accord with the Precepts could they realize That which they had come there to find.

In the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple* it says the following:

> All Buddhas in the three temporal worlds—past, present, and future—affirm that to leave home life behind is to realize the Truth. The twenty-eight Indian Ancestors and the six Chinese Ancestors, all of whom Transmitted the Buddha's Mind seal,* were, each and every one of them, monastics. Most likely, it was because they strictly observed the monastic regulations that they were able to become outstanding models for those in the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form. Thus, in practicing meditation and inquiring of the Way with their Master, they made the Precepts and the monastic regulations foremost. Had they not distanced themselves from their faults and guarded against misdeeds, how could they have realized Buddhahood and become an Ancestor?
>
> As to the method for doing the ordination ceremony of Taking the Precepts, three types of kesas* and a set of mealtime bowls, along with fresh, clean robes, are provided for the one to be ordained. If new

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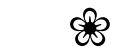
* See *Glossary.*

> robes are not available, be sure to launder old ones, but you must not use borrowed kesas or a borrowed bowl set to put on the altar when doing the ceremony of Taking the Precepts. Concentrate wholeheartedly and take care not to get distracted by side issues. Assuming the form of a Buddha, being provided with the Precepts and the monastic regulations, and acquiring what the Buddha received and made use of are, by no means, small matters, so how could you possibly treat them lightly? Were you to borrow someone's kesas or bowl set, and then go up to the altar to take the Precepts, you would not really be obtaining the Precepts. Should you never receive the Precepts, you will be a person devoid of the Precepts for the whole of your life as you vainly cross over the threshold of empty scholasticism, meaninglessly accepting alms given in good faith. Those entering the path with a beginner's mind may not as yet have memorized the rules and regulations. Should their Master offer no guidance, they will lapse into error. What I am saying here is stern advice indeed. Dare I hope that you will engrave it on your heart? If you have taken the monastic Precepts, by all means you should also take the Bodhisattva* Precepts, for They are foremost for those who would enter the Teaching.[1]

Clearly understand that the full perfecting of the innate enlightenment of all the Buddhas and all the Ancestors has been nothing other than Their leaving home life behind and Their accepting the Precepts. And the vital line of Transmission of all the Buddhas and Ancestors is nothing other than Their leaving home life behind and accepting the Precepts. Those who have not yet left home life behind are also not Buddhas or Ancestors. Meeting up with a Buddha and meeting up with an Ancestor is what leaving home life behind and accepting the Precepts is all about.



Makakashō, in following the World-honored One, was intent on leaving home life behind, as he desired to help all beings to cross to the Other Shore. The Buddha said, "Welcome, good monk." Thereupon, the hair on Makakashō's head naturally came off and a kesa enveloped his body. When someone learns what a

1. The Bodhisattva Precepts can be found in the *Scripture of Brahma's Net.* One translation of this appears in *Buddhist Writings on Meditation and Daily Practice* (Shasta Abbey Press, 1994), pp. 55-188

Buddha is and drops off whatever that person is holding onto, such a one is, in this way, an excellent example of leaving home life behind and accepting the Precepts.

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In the third fascicle of the *Great Scripture on Wisdom* it says the following:

> The World-honored Buddha once said, "If a bodhisattva-mahasattva* were to think thus: 'Were I, at some time, to abandon my position in our nation, then on the very day that I realized supreme, fully perfected wisdom I would, also on that day, turn the Wheel of the Wondrous Dharma in order to help sentient beings beyond count to distance themselves from their defiling passions and to depart from their delusions, as well as help them bring to life their pure Eye for the Dharma. I would also help sentient beings beyond count bring their delusive, evil deeds to an end, and help them set free the Wisdom within their heart. And I would also help sentient beings beyond count realize the state where they neither regressed nor turned away from their supreme, fully perfected Wisdom.' If this bodhisattva-mahasattva were to desire such things, then he or she should, by all means, study the *Great Scripture on Wisdom*."

Generally speaking, our supreme enlightenment is fulfilled at the time of our leaving home life behind and accepting the Precepts. Were there no day on which we left home life behind, then it would not be completely fulfilled. Thus, making use of the day on which we leave home life behind, we bring about the day on which we realize supreme enlightenment, and we pick out the day on which we will realize supreme enlightenment, which is the day on which we leave home life behind. This leaving home life behind turns us upside down. It is the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma. Accordingly, leaving home life behind helps innumerable beings keep from regressing or turning away from supreme enlightenment. Keep in mind that what is meant by fulfilling 'what benefits oneself benefits others' and by not regressing or turning away from fully perfected enlightenment is leaving home life behind and accepting the Precepts. On the other hand, the day of leaving home life behind is the day of realizing what Wisdom truly is. And beyond doubt, you need to realize that the day of leaving home life behind goes beyond sameness or difference.

On the day of leaving home life behind, we experience through our training innumerable eons of time. And on the day of leaving home life behind, we dwell within an unbounded ocean of time, turning the wondrous Wheel of the Dharma. And the day of leaving home life behind should not be thought of as comparable to

'a time to eat', nor is it sixty seconds, but it goes beyond the three periods of past, present, and future, for one has dropped off temporal boundaries. The day of leaving home life behind transcends 'the day of leaving home life behind'. Be this as it may, when we have broken open the nets and cages of our delusions, the day of leaving home life behind will be our day of leaving home life behind. The day for manifesting the Truth will be our day of manifesting the Truth.

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In the thirteenth section of Nāgārjuna's *Commentary on the Great Scripture on Wisdom*, there is the following:

> Once when the Buddha was at Jetavana Park, an intoxicated Brahman came to where the Buddha was and asked to become a monk. The Buddha requested that some of his monks shave the Brahman's head and clothe him in a kesa. After the effects of the liquor had worn off, the Brahman was astonished and frightened upon seeing that his bodily form had changed into that of a Buddhist monk, whereupon he ran away forthwith. The monks respectfully asked the Buddha why He had allowed the drunken Brahman to become a monk only to have him run back home. The Buddha answered, "For eons beyond measure, this Brahman did not have the heart to leave home life behind, but now, while under the influence, he gave rise to a bit of courage. Due to this, he will, later on, leave home life behind."
>
> There are all sorts of stories like this one. The breaking of the Precepts by one who has left home life behind is far better than the keeping of the Precepts by one who has remained in home life, because others do not rid themselves of their delusions and spiritual suffering due to a lay person's keeping of the Precepts.

The principle underlying the Buddha's instructions concerning the Brahman is quite clearly recognizable. Within the Teaching being given here by the Buddha, what is fundamental is simply leaving home life behind. Not yet freeing oneself from home life is not the Buddha's Way.[2] While the Tathagata was in the world,

2. This sentence has been understood in different ways. Some believe that Dōgen is saying everyone must become a monastic, whereas others assert that Dōgen's view is that everyone needs to free oneself from worldly values and worldly ways of thinking and behaving. Perhaps the deciding question is for whom did Dōgen intend this talk? Was he trying to encourage the lay Buddhists who were working at Eihei-ji or otherwise supporting the

whenever non-Buddhists discarded their false views and took refuge in the Teaching of the Buddha, invariably they sought, first off, to leave home life behind. Either the World-honored One Himself would personally greet such persons, saying, "Welcome, good monk!" or He would have His monks shave them, and then have them formally leave home life behind and take the Precepts. In either case, the means for leaving home life behind and taking the Precepts were immediately supplied.

You need to keep in mind that once the Buddha's Teaching envelops our body and mind, the hair on our head naturally falls away and a kesa clothes our body. If the Buddhas had not yet given Their approval, our hair would not have been shaved off, nor would a kesa have been wrapped around our body, nor would we have been able to take the Buddha's Precepts. So, our leaving home life behind and accepting the Precepts is our personally receiving from the Buddhas and the Tathagata the affirmation of our ultimate enlightenment.

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In the *Lotus Scripture*, Shakyamuni Buddha once said the following:

> My virtuous sons! Upon seeing sentient beings who are low in moral character and sunk deep in delusion taking pleasure in trivialities, I, the Tathagata, instruct them by saying, "While still young, I left home life behind and realized supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. And the time since I truly realized Buddhahood has been ever so long." I give instruction in this manner, but only as a skillful means for teaching sentient beings that they too may enter the Buddha's Way.

So, His realizing the Truth long ago was synonymous with His having left home life behind while still young, and His realizing supreme, fully perfected enlightenment was also synonymous with His having left home life behind.

By the Buddha's putting forth the statement, "While still young, I left home life behind," those human beings who are low in moral character and sunk deep in delusion, and who therefore take pleasure in trivialities, also come to realize that they too, though still young, may leave home life behind. At any point where we can encounter, or hear about, and learn through practice the Teaching contained in "While still young, one may leave home life behind," we encounter the Buddha's

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monastery to let go of such values, thinking, and behaving? Or was he upbraiding monks who were disinclined to give up their pursuit of worldly interests?

supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. When He rescued those human beings who were taking pleasure in trivialities, He taught them, "While still young, I left home life behind and realized supreme, fully perfected enlightenment." Though He expressed the Essential Matter* like this, were someone ultimately to ask me, "Just how much merit is there in leaving home life behind?" I would reply, "It is worth your very head!"

Delivered to the assembly at Eihei-ji Temple in Echizen Province on the fifteenth day of the ninth lunar month in the fourth year of the Kangen era (October 25, 1246).

82

On the Spiritual Merits of Leaving Home Life Behind

(Shukke Kudoku)

Translator's Introduction: 'Leaving home life behind' has a double meaning. In one sense, it refers to someone who becomes a monk upon taking the monastic Precepts. In another sense, it refers to the renouncing of the mundane values of worldly society, and as such, would apply not only to monks but also to those who have accepted the lay Precepts while remaining in lay life. Which meaning Dōgen intends seems to shift back and forth, and context does not always make clear whether he is referring to the literal or figurative meaning, or both simultaneously. And there is a third aspect to leaving home life behind which Dōgen brings up later in relation to a quotation from Rinzai.

While Dōgen insists most emphatically throughout this discourse that leaving home life behind is a prerequisite for realizing full Buddhahood, there is no place where he openly rejects being involved with sincere, practicing lay Buddhists. Indeed, in Dōgen's Zen Buddhist tradition, when lay persons formally take all ten Great Precepts, there is a symbolic shaving of the head, and they are given a wagesa, which is a token kesa, along with a certificate containing the bloodline of the Buddhas and Ancestors from Shakyamuni Buddha down to the present ordinand.

The bodhisattva* Nāgārjuna once said the following:

> Someone once asked me, "If we are able to be reborn in some celestial world, realize the Way of bodhisattvas, and realize nirvana by just keeping to the lay Precepts, of what use are the Precepts that a monastic takes?"[1]
>
> In reply, I said, "Both lay people and monastics can reach the Other Shore, but even so, each way has its difficult and its easy aspects. Those in lay life have all manner of duties and occupations. If they should wish to concentrate on pursuing wholeheartedly the Path to full awakening, then their family duties will fall by the wayside, and if they should wholeheartedly fulfill the responsibilities of family life, then matters that pertain to pursuit of the Way will be abandoned. They would need to be able to practice the Dharma without selecting

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* See *Glossary.*

1. The laity in the Theravadin tradition customarily take five Precepts. In the Mahayana tradition, the laity take those five plus five more. Monastics in both traditions take Precepts that number in the hundreds.

one way and abandoning the other. And this is what I would describe as 'taking on what is difficult'. In leaving lay life behind, we sever ourselves from pursuing worldly profits and from indulging in dislikes and wrangling, as we devote ourselves wholeheartedly to practicing the Way, which is what I would describe as 'taking on what is easy'. Also, there is the noise and bustle of a home, with its many affairs and many duties, all of which are the roots of entanglements and the storehouse of wrongdoings. This is what is described as 'taking on what is extremely difficult'. When we leave home, we are, for instance, like someone who has departed to reside somewhere where the lands are empty and there is no one else about. In that way, our heart is as one, being beyond intentions and beyond fear. Our expectations have already been removed. And our wayward ways have also departed. It is like what is being expressed in the following poem:

I sit at ease within the forest grove.
Tranquilly, my human failings are overthrown.
Through being impartial, I attain a singleness of mind,
The pleasure of which surpasses the pleasures of celestial worlds.

Others may seek to gain wealth and honor,
Or fineries of dress or comfortable abodes,
But such pleasures lack true peace,
Since for one in pursuit of gains, there is no satiety.

Adorned in my patched robe, I go forth begging my food,
Whether moving or standing still, I am always at one within my heart.
With my very own Eye of wise discernment,
I fathom the True Nature of all thoughts and things.

Within the sundry gates to the Dharma,
I enter, only to see that all are just alike,
So this Heart that understands the Why of things is tranquil,
For there is nothing that can surpass It within the triple world.[2]

2. The triple world consists of the worlds of desire, form, and beyond form.

"Thus, by this poem we know that leaving home life behind, living by the Precepts, and doing the practice as a monk is 'taking on what is extremely easy'.

"Further, leaving home life behind and practicing the Precepts gain for us good moral rules and regulations beyond measure, all of which we possess to the full. For this reason, a white-robed one like you should leave home life behind and accept the full Precepts.[3]

"Further, within the Buddha Dharma the Teaching of leaving home life behind is the most difficult to practice. The young Brahman Jambukadaka once asked Shariputra, 'Within the Buddha Dharma what is the most difficult thing to do?'

"Shariputra responded, 'Leaving home life behind is the most difficult to achieve.'

"The Brahman then asked, 'What are the difficulties in leaving home life behind?'

"Shariputra replied, 'In leaving home life behind, contentment is the most difficult to achieve.'

"The Brahman then asked, 'When one has attained contentment, what then is the most difficult to attain?'

"Shariputra responded, 'Putting good ways into practice is what is difficult. For this reason, by all means you should leave home life behind.'

"Further, when someone leaves home life behind, the Lord of Demons, taken aback, sorrowfully says, 'This person has scarcely any entanglements or delusions left. Such a one will certainly realize nirvana and enter the ranks of the Sangha Treasure.'

"And also, it says the following in the story concerning the female monastic Utpalavarna:

"If people who have left home life behind to be within the Buddha Dharma break the Precepts and lapse into impure ways, once they have brought their impure ways to an end and obtained liberation from them, they will be like the female monk Utpalavarna.

"While the Buddha was in the world, this female monk attained the six spiritual abilities and realized arhathood.* She once entered the house of a member of the nobility and, continually extolling the Dharma of leaving home life behind, she admonished the wives and

3. 'A white-robed one' is a common reference to a lay person.

daughters of the noble, saying, 'My sisters, you should leave home life behind and become monastics.'

"The noblewomen all replied, 'We are young and our bodies are comely; for us to keep to the Precepts would indeed be hard, and we would surely beak them on occasion.'

"The monk replied, 'If you break the Precepts, then you break them. Just leave lay life behind!'

"They then asked her, 'If we break the Precepts, then we shall certainly fall into some hellish state, so why would you have us break them?'

"She replied, 'If you fall into some hell, then you fall into some hell.'

"All the women broke out in laughter and said, 'In a hell we will receive the consequences of our defiling deeds, so why would you have us fall into such a state?'

"The monk replied, 'In recalling my own past lives, there was a time when I had become a prostitute. I dressed up in all sorts of clothes and told the age-old licentious stories. One day, I dressed up as a female monk, just as a joke. As a direct result of this, I became a female monk in Kashō Buddha's time. After a while, I took to depending on my aristocratic demeanor and gave rise to pride and arrogance, thereby breaking monastic prohibitions as well as Precepts. Because of the defilement from breaking monastic prohibitions and Precepts, I fell into a hellish state where I suffered the consequences of my various defiling acts. After I had suffered these consequences, I met Shakyamuni Buddha and left home life behind, ultimately obtaining the six spiritual abilities and realizing arhathood. Due to this, I have come to know that if we leave home life behind and take the monastic Precepts, even though we later break Precepts, we <u>will</u> realize arhathood because of the karmic* effect of the Precepts. If I had merely done bad things, without having received any effects from the Precepts, I would not have realized the Way. In times long past, I had fallen into hellish states generation after generation, getting out of some hell only to become a wicked person. When that wicked person died, again a hell was entered and nothing whatever had been gained. Now because of this, I have come to realize that if someone leaves home to be a monastic and takes the Precepts, even though that person breaks the Precepts, because of having taken them, that person <u>will</u> obtain the fruits of the Way.'

> "Also, once when the Buddha was at Jetavana Park, an intoxicated Brahman came to where the Buddha was and asked to become a monk. The Buddha requested that some of his monks shave the Brahman's head and clothe him in a kesa.* After the effects of the liquor wore off, the Brahman was astonished and frightened upon seeing that his bodily form had changed into that of a Buddhist monk, whereupon he forthwith ran away. The monks respectfully asked the Buddha why He had allowed the drunken Brahman to become a monk only to run back home. The Buddha answered, 'For eons beyond measure, this Brahman did not have the heart to leave home life behind, but now, while under the influence, he gave rise to a bit of courage. Due to this, he will, later on, leave home life behind.'
>
> "In various stories like these, the benefit from leaving home life behind is described as producing spiritual merit beyond measure. Even though one who is garbed in white may have the five Precepts, such a one does not know what leaving home life behind is like."

Thus the World-honored One let the intoxicated Brahman hear about leaving home life behind and taking the Precepts, thereby planting the first seeds for realizing the Way. Clearly, you need to know that, from ancient times, human beings who still lack the merits of having left home life behind have not been able to realize the fully awakened state of Buddhahood. Because the Brahman was in his cups, he gave rise to a bit of courage, and by having his head shaved and his taking the Precepts, he became a monk. Though it was not long before he sobered up, the principle that he will preserve the merits of this act and will increase his good roots for realizing the Way is to be found in the World-honored One's golden words of Truth, for this was the Tathagata's original wish, which led Him to come forth into the world. All sentient beings—be they of past, present, or future—should clearly trust in this principle and put it into practice. Truly, giving rise to the intention to realize the Way is something that one establishes moment by moment. The merits from this Brahman's momentarily leaving home life behind are just like this. And what is more, how could the merits of your leaving home life behind and taking the Precepts during your present lifetime be inferior to those of an intoxicated Brahman!

The saintly Wheel-turning Lords* emerged more than eighty-thousand years ago and ruled over the four continents, having been supplied with the seven royal

treasures.[4] At that time, these four continents were all like Pure Lands. The delight of these Wheel-turning Lords goes beyond words to express. It is said that there were some of these Wheel-turning Lords who ruled over three-thousandfold worlds. Distinctions have been made among those whose Wheel was of gold, silver, copper, or iron. Those with these Wheels ruled over the first, second, third, and fourth continents, respectively. And their whole being was positively free from the ten evils.[5] Though these saintly Wheel-turning Lords enjoyed their delights in abundance, as soon as a single white hair appeared on their head, they would turn their office over to the crown prince and forthwith leave home life behind. They would don a kesa and go off into the mountains or forests to do their spiritual training, so that when they came to the end of their life, they would undoubtedly be reborn in Brahma's Heaven.[6] They would place their white hair in a golden coffer to be stored in the royal palace and passed on to the next Wheel-turning Lord. When the hair of the next Wheel-turning Lord turned white, he would do the same as the previous Lord. The length of a saintly Wheel-turning Lord's life after leaving home life behind far surpasses that of people today. It is said that the life of a Wheel-turning Lord is more than eighty thousand years and his body is endowed with the thirty-two physical marks, which surpass those of people today.[7] Be that as it may, when such Wheel-turning Lords saw their white hair, they awoke to impermanence and invariably left home life behind to train in the Way in order to fully realize the merit of practicing untainted deeds. Rulers today cannot match the saintly Wheel-turning Lords. If today's rulers were to waste precious time just chasing after their greeds and ultimately failed to leave home life behind them, they might well come to regret it in future ages. And what is more, in small nations in remote lands, there are rulers in name only, for they lack the virtues of a Wheel-turning Lord and are unable to bring their greeds to a halt. But if they were to leave home life behind and practice the Way, many celestial beings would be glad to offer them their protection, dragon spirits would respectfully guard them, and the Eye of Buddhas would joyfully confirm their awakened state.

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4. The seven are the Golden Wheel, wise elephants, swift horses, the divine Pearl, able ministers, women as precious as jewels, and loyal generals.

5. The ten evils are the ways in which one acts contrary to the ten Mahayana Precepts.

6. The heaven ruled over by Lord Brahma, the lowest of the four meditational heavens in the world of form, one that is free of sexual desires.

7. According to ancient Indian traditions, both Buddhas and Wheel-turning Lords were born with the thirty-two marks of a great being.

During her past as a prostitute, Utpalavarnā put on the robe of a female monastic, not with a sincere heart but for the sake of making a joke out of it. More than probably, she was committing a wrong deed by making light of the Dharma, but the power of her having put this robe upon her body brought her face-to-face with the Buddha Dharma in a second generation. The female monastic's robe refers to a kesa. As a result of her having previously donned the kesa as a joke, she met Kashō Buddha in a second lifetime. She left home life behind, took the Precepts, and became a female monastic. As the result of her having broken the Precepts, she fell into a hellish state as the consequence of her misdeeds. But, due to the merits of the kesa not having crumbled away, she ultimately met Shakyamuni Buddha, and upon meeting the Buddha and hearing His Teaching, she gave rise to the intention to devote herself to the training, leaving the triple world far behind her and ultimately becoming a great arhat, one possessed of the six spiritual abilities and the three kinds of spiritual insights. Without doubt, she must have realized the supreme Truth.

Therefore, when you straightaway and in all earnestness commit your innately immaculate heart of faith to realizing supreme enlightenment and accept the kesa in trust, the spiritual merit of this will increase faster than the spiritual merit of that prostitute. And what is more, when you give rise to the heart that seeks enlightenment, leave home life behind, and accept the Precepts, all for the sake of supreme enlightenment, the spiritual merit of this will be beyond measure, for without a human body, it is rare indeed for any being to realize this spiritual merit.

In India and China, there have been many monks and lay people who have been bodhisattvas and Ancestral Masters, but none is the equal of our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna. Only our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna has offered us stories like those of the intoxicated Brahman and the prostitute in order to encourage us human beings to leave home life behind and accept the Precepts.

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This is what our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna recorded of the golden speech of the World-honored One:

> The World-honored One once said, "In the southern continent of Jambudvipa,* there are four kinds of preeminent events: first is encountering a Buddha, second is hearing the Dharma, third is leaving home life behind, and fourth is realizing the Truth."

You need to clearly recognize that these four kinds of preeminent events surpass anything in the northern continent of Uttarakura or in the celestial abodes.[8] Being drawn along through the power of our long-accumulated good roots, we have now acquired the peerless body of a human being. We are people who can joyfully, and with deepest gratitude, leave home life behind and accept the Precepts. Do not treat this preeminently good body lightly and leave our dew-like life to the mercy of the winds of impermanence. By piling up life after life of leaving home life behind, we will be amassing merit and accumulating virtue.

> The World-honored One once said, "The karmic recompense that results from having left home life behind in order to be within the Buddha Dharma is mind-boggling. Even if someone were to erect a seven-jeweled stupa* that was high enough to reach the thirty-third heavenly world, the merit gained from such a deed would not equal that from leaving home life behind. And why is this so? Because a seven-jeweled stupa can be demolished by foolish people acting from their greed and wickedness, but there is nothing that can destroy the merits of leaving home life behind. Thus, if someone instructs both men and women about leaving home life behind, and if they then set their servants free to do so, or if they let the populace at large do so, or if they themselves leave home life behind and enter the Way, the merits of that are immeasurable."

The World-honored One clearly knew the amount of merit involved, and so He evaluated it in this manner. Shrīvaddhi, whose name means 'he whose wealth is ever increasing', on hearing this Teaching of the Buddha, felt compelled to leave home life behind and take the Precepts, even though he had already reached the advanced age of a hundred and twenty years.[9] He sat in the rear of the assembly alongside the young novices, polishing his training. He ultimately became a great arhat.

Keep in mind that having a human body in this lifetime is something temporary, comprised as it is of the four elements* and the five skandhas.* It is

8. Uttarakura is the realm of those who are in a state of continual, blissful ignorance.

9. When Shrīvaddhi asked if he could become a monk, Shariputra told him he was now too old, but the Buddha intervened and ordained him.

always subject to the eight forms of pain.[10] And what is more, its arising and vanishing goes on uninterruptedly moment by moment. It is said that during one click of our fingers, sixty-five of these moments of time arise and disappear, but we are in the dark about this, due to our lack of awareness. Within the period of a single day and night, there are over sixty-four hundred million of these moments during which our five skandhas arise and disappear, but we are unaware of this. How sad that even as we arise and vanish, we ourselves are unaware of it! This measure of the arising and vanishing of a moment has been known only by the World-honored Buddha and Shariputra. Not even the saintly have known it. In accord with this principle of the appearance and disappearance of each moment, human beings fashion their good or wicked deeds, and give rise to their intention to realize both Buddhahood and the Way. Ours is a body that appears and disappears in this manner, so even though we treasure it, it does not remain unchanging. Since time immemorial, there has never been a single person who, through prizing the body, has kept it from changing. In this sense, this human body does not belong to us. But if we make use of it to turn ourselves around so that we may leave home life behind and accept the Precepts, then we may realize the supreme, fully perfected enlightenment of the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds, as well as the fruits of Buddhahood, which are as indestructible as a diamond. What sage person would not be delighted to seek for them?

According to the *Lotus Scripture,* the eight disciples of the Buddha Whose Guiding Light Is as Luminous as the Sun and Moon all renounced their previous lordly positions in which they held dominion over the four earthly continents and left home life behind. And the sixteen disciples of the Buddha Whose Universal Wisdom Is Unsurpassed had, all together, left home life behind as well. Then, when the Buddha of Universal Wisdom entered eternal meditation, they gave voice to the *Lotus Scripture* for the sake of His assembly and have now become Tathagatas in the ten quarters. Eighty trillion people under the governance of their paternal lord, who was a saintly Wheel-turning Lord, upon seeing the sixteen princes leave home life behind, also sought to leave home life behind, whereupon the Wheel-turning Lord forthwith granted it. And the two sons of His Majesty the Lord of Wondrous Splendor, along with their father and mother, all left home life behind. Keep in mind that whenever great saintly ones have appeared in the world, they have invariably viewed leaving home life behind to be what the True Teaching is. You must not go around saying that these people left home life behind because

10. The eight are being born, aging, sickening, dying, being separated from loved ones, having to associate with those one dislikes, chasing after what is unobtainable, and suffering the ills that afflict the five skandhas.

they were confused; if you realize that they left home life behind out of wisdom, you should consider doing the same. During the time of Shakyamuni, our Buddha of the present, His son Rahula and His cousin Ananda, among others, left home life behind, along with a thousand of the Buddha's Shakya clan on one occasion and twenty thousand on another. We should consider them to be excellent examples. From the time when His first five monks left home until the time when Subhadra, at the end of the Buddha's life, also did so, all those who were converted to the Buddha's Teaching left behind their worldly ways. You need to know that this is what we call 'immeasurable merit'.

Thus, if worldly people have compassion for their offspring, they should forthwith let them leave home life behind. If they have compassion for their parents, they should let them leave home life behind as well. For this reason, there is a poem which says the following:

If there were no past ages,
There could not have been Buddhas in the past.
If there were no Buddhas in the past,
There could be no leaving home to accept the full Precepts.

This poem is one for all Buddhas and Tathagatas. It annihilates the non-Buddhist assertion that there were no past ages. Thus, you should know that leaving home to accept the full Precepts is the Teaching of the Buddhas of the past. Fortunately, we are living in a time when leaving home life behind and accepting the full Precepts is the wondrous Teaching of the Buddhas; were we to vainly fail to leave home and accept the Precepts, it would be difficult indeed to fathom what the obstacle is. By relying upon this most modest physical existence of ours, we may well realize the most exalted merit, for it can be the greatest merit within Jambudvipa and its three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form. While this human body in Jambudvipa has not yet disappeared, we should, by all means, leave home life behind and accept the Precepts.

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An ancient holy one—Master Bashumitsu—once said:

> Even though someone who has left home life behind may act counter to the Precepts, nevertheless, that person surpasses one who has kept to the Precepts while remaining in lay life. Thus, it is difficult to repay the benevolence of one who humbly gives voice to the Scriptures that encourage people to leave home life behind. Further, the one who encourages others to leave home life behind is simply

> someone who is encouraging the practicing of the most venerable of deeds. The karmic recompense that results from this surpasses even that of Lord Yama, a Wheel-turning Lord, or the guardian deity Shakrendra. Thus, it is difficult to repay the benevolence of one who humbly gives voice to the Scriptures that encourage people to leave home life behind. There is no case where Scriptures encourage people to accept just the Precepts of a lay follower, hence that practice is not substantiated by the Scriptures.

Keep in mind that once you have left home life behind, even if you then act counter to one of the restrictive Precepts, your practice surpasses remaining in home life and not acting counter to the lay Precepts. By taking refuge in the Buddha, leaving home life behind, and accepting the Precepts, you will invariably excel. The recompense from leaving home life behind surpasses that of a Lord Yama, a Wheel-turning Lord, and a Shakrendra. Even had you been a peasant or an untouchable in India, if you left home life behind, you would surpass those of the warrior caste, as well as surpass a Lord Yama, a Wheel-turning Lord, or a Shakrendra. The Precepts of those who remain in home life are not like this, therefore you should leave home life behind. Keep in mind that what the World-honored One taught cannot be fully measured, even though His teachings were collected from far and wide by the World-honored Master Bashumitsu, along with his five hundred arhats. Truly, you need to keep in mind that when it comes to the Buddha's Dharma, you must be clear about Its fundamental principles. Mundane teachers of recent times have not been able to fathom the wisdom from the three spiritual insights and six spiritual abilities of a single saintly person, much less that of the five hundred saintly arhats![11] These saintly ones knew what mundane teachers of recent times do not know, they have seen what these teachers have not seen, and they have realized what these others have not realized. There is nothing that mundane teachers know that was unknown to these saintly ones. So, do not compare the ignorant and foolish explanations of mundane teachers with the insightful words of the saintly.

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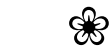
It says in the 120th fascicle of the *Vibāshā Commentary, "*Even one who has given rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood and then leaves home life behind is already called a saintly one. How much more so is one who has attained

11. The three spiritual insights are the recognition of universal impermanence, universal suffering, and the universal absence of any permanent, unchanging self. Dōgen discussed the six spiritual abilities in detail in Discourse 24: On the Marvelous Spiritual Abilities *(Jinzū)*.

awareness of the Four Noble Truths!" Keep in mind that one who has given rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood and then leaves home life behind is already called a saintly one.



Among Shakyamuni Buddha's five hundred great vows, number 137 is as follows:

> In the future, after I have fully realized true enlightenment, if there are any who desire to leave home life behind to be within the Dharma, I vow that they will know no obstacles due to physical weakness, loss of memory, emotional distress, pride, lack of reverence, being foolish, lacking wise discernment, being entangled in many defiling passions, or being mentally distracted. Should it be otherwise, then I have not realized true enlightenment.

His vow number 138 is as follows:

> In the future, after I have fully realized true enlightenment, if there are any women who desire to leave home life behind to study My Teaching and take the Great Precepts, I vow to help them accomplish the Way. Should it be otherwise, then I have not realized true enlightenment.

His vow number 314 is as follows:

> In the future, after I have fully realized true enlightenment, if there are human beings whose good roots are few, but who give rise to feelings of love for their good roots and delight in them, I will help them leave home life behind to study the Way within the Buddha Dharma, and I will help them dwell peacefully within the ten immaculate Precepts. Should it be otherwise, then I have not realized true enlightenment.

Keep in mind that the good sons and daughters who have left home life behind have all received assistance from the strength of His great vows made long ago in the past, and thus have been able, unhindered, to leave home life behind and accept the Precepts. Through His vows, the Tathagata has already been helping us to leave home life behind. Clearly, He is saying that leaving home is the most venerable, unsurpassed great merit.

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The Buddha once said:

> Moreover, if there are any who follow My example by shaving their head, putting on a kesa, and accepting the Precepts, then anyone who makes alms offerings to them will ultimately succeed in entering the fortress that is free from fear of temptations. Because this is the way things are, I teach in this manner.

Even if someone with a shaven head dons a kesa but does not take the Precepts, anyone who makes an alms offering to that person will enter the fortress that is free from fear of temptations.[12] The Buddha also said the following:

> And further, if there is someone who, for My sake, has undertaken leaving home life behind and has donned a kesa, but has not yet taken the Precepts, should someone who is devoid of the Teaching torment or harm this person, even going so far as to undertake to destroy the Dharma Body and the Reward Body of a Buddha of the three temporal worlds,[13] it will be because they are fully committed to the three evil worlds of existence."[14]
>
> If there are any human beings who, for My sake, have left home life behind, shaved their head, and donned a kesa, even though they have not kept to the Precepts, they are already stamped with the Nirvana seal.[15] Further, if they have left home life behind but do not keep to the Precepts, should anyone who is devoid of the Teaching then speak ill of them, humiliate them, or insult them, or should strike, bind, or cut them by using a hand, a sword, or a stick, or if that person should steal their kesa or their monk's bowl, or steal from them their various monastic necessities, then such a one acts to harm the real

12. That is, the person making the alms offering may not know whether the monk has taken the Precepts or not and will, therefore, still receive the merit of their offering.

13. The Reward Body is the *Sambhogakaya,* the second of the three Bodies of the Buddha. The first is the Truth Body *(Dharmakaya),* which represents Absolute Truth or Buddha Mind Itself. The Reward Body represents the blissful reward of Buddhist training. The third is the Transformation Body *(Nirmanakaya)*, which is the physical body of the Buddha as it appears in the world.

14. That is, they are acting like a savage beast, a hungry ghost, or a power-mad asura.

15. The Nirvana seal is associated with the stillness that derives from the keeping to the Noble Eightfold Path.

> Reward Body of the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds and offends the eyes of all humans, both the ordinary and the lofty. Because this person wants to hide the seeds of the true Teaching and the Three Treasures which Buddhas possess, and because this person is interfering with the ability of both the lofty and the worldly to receive the benefits of these seeds, it will cause such a one to fall into some hellish state because this person, out of his conceit, is broadening the roads to the three evil worlds of existence.

Keep in mind that when people shave their heads and dye their robes a monkish color, even though they may not keep to the Precepts, they are still stamped with the supremely great Nirvana seal. If someone worries them, that person aims at injuring the Reward Body of the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds, which is equivalent to a traitorous wrongdoing. Clearly keep in mind that the merits of leaving home life behind go hand-in-hand with the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds.

The Buddha also once said:

> Now then, those who leave home life behind ought not give rise to evil acts. Should they give rise to evil acts, then they have not left behind worldly ways. The body and speech of those who have left home life behind are in accord. When they are not in accord, then there is no leaving home life behind. When I left home life behind in order to explore the Way, I gave up parents, brothers, wife and child, relatives, and acquaintances. It was a time when I was accumulating meritorious insights; it was not a time for accumulating non-meritorious insights. 'Meritorious insights' means having compassion for all living beings as if they were one's own offspring. 'Non-meritorious insights' are altogether different from these.

Based on this, what is inherent in leaving home life behind is having compassion for all living beings as if they were one's own offspring. This means not giving rise to evil acts, and our body and speech being in mutual accord. Since this is what one's leaving home life behind is like, its merit will be like what the Buddha also said:

> Furthermore, Shariputra, if bodhisattvas and mahasattvas* wish to realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, then on that very day when they leave home life behind, they should wish to turn the Wheel of the Dharma, because immeasurably great numbers of sentient beings have not been able to accept the whole of the Dharma.

> When they turn the Wheel of the Dharma, if they desire to free their own minds from the taint of delusions and enable immeasurably numerous sentient beings to realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment without regressing or turning away from it, then they should learn the *prajñāpāramitā*, which is the wisdom needed to help ferry all sentient beings to the Other Shore."

The bodhisattvas who have learned the *prajñāpāramitā* are our Ancestors, one after the other. At the same time, supreme, fully perfected enlightenment is invariably brought to maturity on the very day when one leaves home life behind. Even so, as students of the Way, you need to know that when bodhisattvas do the practice that is identical with enlightenment for three eons of indefinite length or for immeasurable eons of indefinite length, they do not taint that practice with notions of its being limited or unlimited.

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> If a bodhisattva-mahasattva were to think, "At some point in time, I will undoubtedly relinquish my position in our country and leave home life behind. On that day I will realize supreme enlightened wisdom. And on that day I will turn the wondrous Wheel of the Dharma, whereupon I will help immeasurable, countless living beings depart from the spiritual dust and dirt of life, and produce the immaculate Eye of the Dharma. Also, I will help immeasurable, countless living beings completely bring to an end all the taint from their delusions and set free the Wisdom in their heart. Also, I will be able to help immeasurable, countless living beings keep from regressing or turning aside from their supreme enlightenment." Then, this bodhisattva-mahasattva should, by all means, study the *Wisdom Scriptures*.

This describes the merit of the Buddha's coming into existence in a royal palace as a bodhisattva embodied for the final time, and of His relinquishing His position in His country in order to realize genuine enlightenment and turn the Wheel of the Dharma to help all sentient being reach the Other Shore.

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There is a biography of the Buddha that has the following account:

> Prince Siddhārtha took from His charioteer Chandaka's side a sword whose hilt was encrusted with the seven precious jewels* and other gems. Grasping the sword with His right hand, He drew it from

> its scabbard. With His left hand, He then took hold of His shell-shaped topknot, which was the deep blue color of a water lily, and with His right hand He cut it off. Then with His left hand, He dedicated it before discarding it by throwing it into the sky. At that moment, there arose in the Celestial Lord Indra a great joy, something that he was not accustomed to feeling. He caught hold of the Prince's topknot and, not allowing it to touch the ground, he wrapped it in a wondrous celestial robe for safe keeping. Then all manner of celestial beings made their most excellent offerings to it out of respect.

This is how the Tathagata Shakyamuni, whilst still a prince, came to climb over the walls of the palace in the middle of the night and, with the coming of the morning, went into the mountains and cut off the hair from His own head. At that time, the celestial beings from the Heaven of Pure Abiding came down to shave His head and offer Him the kesa.[16] This is undoubtedly an auspicious sign of a Tathagata emerging in the world and is the usual way with World-honored Buddhas.

Not even one Buddha, at any place or at any time, has ever realized Buddhahood whilst remaining in home life. Because there have been Buddhas in the past, the merit of leaving home life behind and taking the Precepts exists. A sentient being's realizing the Way invariably depends on leaving home life behind and accepting the Precepts. In short, because the merits of leaving home life behind and accepting the Precepts are the customary way of Buddhas, the merits of these acts are beyond measure. Some people are of the opinion that one may realize Buddhahood whilst holding onto lay life, and likewise, some think that one may realize Buddhahood whilst holding onto distinctions based on gender, but these views are not accurate.[17]

> During the time of our Fourth Indian Ancestor, the Venerable Ubakikuta, there was a certain rich man's son by the name of Daitaka. He came to the Venerable One and, bowing low, sincerely sought to leave home life behind. The Venerable One said, "Are you leaving home life in body, or are you leaving home life in mind?"
>
> Daitaka responded, "I have come to leave home life behind, but it is not for the sake of my body or my mind."

16. The Heaven of Pure Abiding is the highest of the celestial abodes that comprise the world of form.

17. Dōgen's views on gender-based distinctions are clearly enunciated in the second half of Discourse 10: On 'Respectful Bowing Will Secure for You the Very Marrow of the Way' *(Raihai Tokuzui)*.

> The Venerable One then asked him, "If it is not for the sake of your body or your mind, well then, who is it that is leaving home life behind?"
>
> Daitaka responded, "Well, those who leave home life behind do so because there is no 'I, me, my, or mine'. Because they have no 'I, me, my, or mine', their Mind is not subject to arising and passing away. The Mind's not arising and passing away is the normal procedure. And it is normal for Buddhas, as well; Their mind has no characteristic form, and it is the same with Their body."
>
> The Venerable One then said, "You will undoubtedly have a great awakening, and your mind will quite naturally fully comprehend the Matter.* Well and good. Through your devotion to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, you will inherit Their saintly seeds and help Them flourish." He then had Daitaka leave home life behind and receive ordination.

Well, now, to meet the Dharma of the Buddhas and leave home life behind is the foremost form of excellent karmic recompense for good deeds done in the past. That process is not done for the sake of 'me', nor for the sake of 'mine', nor for the sake of 'my body and mind', for it was not Daitaka's body and mind that left home life behind. It is no different from the underlying principle that what leaves home life behind is not an 'I' or a 'mine'. When it is not a matter of 'me' and 'mine', it will be the process of Buddhas, for it is simply a Buddha's customary way. Because it is a Buddha's customary way, it is not only beyond 'I' or 'mine', it is also beyond 'my body and mind'. It is beyond comparison with those in the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form. Because this is the way things are, leaving home life behind is the supreme method. It is beyond sudden and gradual, beyond certainty and uncertainty, beyond something that comes and something that goes, beyond what has been ever-abiding and what is newly fashioned, beyond what is broad and what is narrow, beyond the large and the small, and beyond what is dependent on circumstances and what is independent of circumstances. There has never been a case of an Ancestral Master of the genuine Transmission of the Buddha Dharma failing to leave home life behind and accept the Precepts. The underlying principle of Daitaka's present encountering of the Venerable Ubakikuta for the first time and seeking to leave home life behind was no different. He left home life behind, received ordination, trained under the Venerable Ubakikuta, and ultimately became our Fifth Ancestral Master.

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Our Seventeenth Indian Ancestor, the Venerable Sōgyanandai, was the son of Ratnavyūha, the King of Koshala, who dwelt in the capital city of Shravasti. No sooner had he been born than he could speak, constantly praising Buddhist matters. By the age of seven he had lost interest in worldly pleasures and, speaking in verse, he announced the following to his parents:

Prostrating myself before you, my most wise father,
And bowing to you, mother of my bones and blood,
I now desire to leave home life behind,
Praying for your happiness for the compassion you have shown me.

His parents firmly forbade this, whereupon he stopped eating that very day. Because of this, they permitted him to leave home life behind while continuing to stay in their home. They give him the name of Sōgyanandai and appointed a monk named Zenrita to be his teacher.[18] By his nineteenth year, he had still not regressed or lost interest in his training. This Venerable One kept saying to himself, "My body resides in a royal palace, so how can that be 'leaving home?'" One night, a bright light poured down from the heavens and Sōgyanandai saw that it illumined a broad, level pathway. Without thinking, he slowly walked down it for some ten miles until he arrived before a huge grotto. There was a stone cavern, which he entered, settling down in its quietude. His father had, by that time, discovered the loss of his son. Thereupon, he sent Zenrita from the palace out into the countryside to search for his son, but he did not find the young man's whereabouts. After ten years had passed, the Venerable One realized the Dharma and received the confirmation. He then traveled to the kingdom of Madai, teaching as he went.

The terms 'remaining in home life' and 'leaving home life behind' were first heard of at this time. An excellent example of this is Sōgyanandai's finding the broad road within the celestial light. As a result of the help received from his good deeds in past lives, he was finally able to leave the royal palace and arrive at the stone cavern.

18. Zenrita is the Japanese reading of the Chinese characters used to spell out the monk's name in Sanskrit, but it is not certain what the actual Sanskrit equivalent is.

Those who have no interest in worldly amusements and who deplore the dust and dirt of defiling passions are saintly ones. Those who crave the stimulation of their five senses and give no thought to freeing themselves from the tyranny of the senses are truly foolish and confused. The T'ang dynasty emperors T'ai-tsung and Su-tsung often associated with monastics, but they still coveted their royal position and never cast it aside. Daikan Enō, while still a layman, had already left his mother, becoming our Sixth Ancestor due to the merits of his having left home life behind. Layman Hō'on cast aside his worldly treasures, but he did not cast aside his defiling passions, which can be called the height of folly.[19] Daikan Enō's strength in the Way and Hō'on's method of practice are not to be compared. Those who are clear about the Matter invariably leave home life behind, whereas those who are in the dark end up at home, which creates the causes and conditions that produce misfortunate karmic recompense.

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One day, Meditation Master Nangaku Ejō spontaneously came out with this laudatory remark:

> Well now, leaving home life behind is done for the sake of the Dharma, which goes beyond anything that arises. There is nothing that surpasses It in the heavens above or among humankind.

His phrase, 'the Dharma, which goes beyond anything that arises' refers to the Tathagata's true Teaching, which is why nothing surpasses It in the heavens above or among humankind. 'In the heavens above' refers to the six heavens in the world of desire, the eighteen heavens in the world of form, and the four heavens in the world beyond form, yet none of them can compare with the way of leaving home life behind.

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Meditation Master Banzan Hōshaku once said:

> O my virtuous meditative monks, the practice of the Way that hits the bull's-eye resembles the earth holding aloft a mountain without realizing that it is a solitary peak, or it is like a stone in which a jewel is embedded without the stone realizing how flawless the jewel is. Whoever is like this is called one who has left home life behind.

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19. A lay person who originally studied under Sekitō Kisen, but who went on to become a lay disciple of Baso Dōitsu.

The true Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors is not necessarily concerned with realizing or not realizing something. Because leaving home life behind is the true Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors, its spiritual merit is evident.

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Meditation Master Rinzai Gigen in Chienchou Province once said:

> Well now, those who have left home life behind should be able to correctly discern what a normal, reliable view is. They should be able to distinguish between a Buddha and a demon, between the true and the false, between the worldly and the saintly. If someone is able to discern things in this way, we call that one someone who has left home life behind. If someone cannot distinguish a demon from a Buddha, we invariably call such a person someone who leaves one home only to enter another home and who thereby creates karma. We cannot consider such a person to be one who has genuinely left home life behind.

What he calls 'a normal, reliable view' means having such things as a deep conviction in cause and effect, and a deep faith in the Three Treasures. What he calls 'distinguishing a Buddha' means being clear in realizing what the merits of a Buddha are, both as to their cause and as to their result. It is being able to clearly distinguish between the genuine and the fake, the mundane and the saintly. When it comes to demons and Buddhas, if you are not clear about the difference, you will sacrifice your practice of the Way, regressing or turning away from it. If you detect the doings of demons and do not pursue those activities, then you will not be regressing from your ability to discern the Way. We consider this to be the method of someone who has truly left home life behind. There are many who vainly consider the doings of demons to be the Buddha Dharma. It is the mistake of modern times. You who are learning should quickly recognize demons, be clear about Buddhas, and practice the Way, which is enlightenment itself.

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> At the time of the Tathagata's entering His parinirvana, the bodhisattva Makakashō said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, since a Tathagata is equipped with the ability to know what someone's spiritual conditions are, You surely must have known that Sunakshatra

would sever his good spiritual roots. What conditions caused You to allow him to leave home life behind?" [20]

The Buddha responded, "O My good disciple, in the past when I first left home life behind, my younger half-brother Nanda, along with my cousins Ananda and Devadatta, as well as my son Rahula, among others in My clan, all followed Me in leaving home life behind in order to train in the Way. Had I not allowed Sunakshatra to leave home life behind, he would ultimately have inherited the royal position of king. Had he been free to exert that power, he might have destroyed the Buddha Dharma. Because of this condition, I allowed him to leave home life behind and practice the Way. O My good disciple, had Sunakshatra not left home life behind to become a monk, he would still have severed his good roots and, for untold generations, he would have had no spiritual benefits at all. Now, after someone has left home life behind, were that person to cut off his good spiritual roots, he would still be able to keep to the Precepts by donating his services, as well as showing his respect, to those who were long-time monks, greatly experienced monks, and virtuous persons, and by practicing the four stages of meditation. These are called good causes that can give rise to good ways. If people have already given rise to good ways, they will be practicing and learning the Way. If they are already practicing and learning the Way, they can realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. This is why I let Sunakshatra leave home life behind. O My good disciple, if I had not let Sunakshatra leave home life and take the Precepts as a monk, then I could not be called a Tathagata possessing the ten abilities.[21] O My good disciple, a Buddha recognizes whether a human being is possessed of virtuous or

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20. Sunakshatra is said to have been one of Prince Siddhārtha's close relatives who, as a monk, served as a personal attendant to the Buddha. Though he was well informed in all the Buddha's Teachings, he later returned to lay life where he reviled the Three Treasures. As a result, he is said to have fallen into a state of hellish suffering during his lifetime.

21. The ten abilities of a Tathagata are (1) recognizing what is right or wrong under any circumstances; (2) recognizing what everyone's karma is in past, present, and future; (3) comprehending the various forms of meditation; (4) recognizing the superior or inferior qualities of others; (5) recognizing the desires of others; (6) recognizing the spiritual lineage of others; (7) recognizing which of the six worlds of existence someone is headed for; (8) knowing the past lives of others; (9) recognizing everyone's patterns of birth and death; and (10) knowing how to destroy all delusions within oneself and others.

> non-virtuous ways. Even though this man Sunakshatra possessed both these ways, in time he succeeded in severing all his good roots until he possessed only non-virtuous roots. And why? Because such human beings have no close friends who are spiritually good, they do not pay attention to the True Teaching, they do not think of what is spiritually good, and they do not act in accord with the Dharma. This is why they sever all their good roots until they possess only non-virtuous roots.

Keep in mind that the World-honored Tathagata was quite aware that there were human beings who might cut off their good roots; still, out of His great benevolence and great compassion, He let them leave home life behind in order to give them a cause to be virtuous. The causes of cutting off one's good roots are due to failing to associate with virtuous friends, failing to listen to the true Teaching, failing to think about what is good, and failing to act in accord with the Dharma. You who are now learning the Way must keep close to morally good friends and be on intimate terms with them. What we call 'a good friend' is someone who asserts that Buddhas do exist and teaches us that there is wrongdoing, as well as happiness. One who does not deny cause and effect is considered a good friend and a good counselor. What such a one gives expression to is the true Teaching. To think about this principle is to think about what is good. To act in this way will be to act in accord with the Dharma. Thus, regardless of whether people choose to be our intimates or not, you should simply recommend that they leave home life behind and take the Precepts. Do not pay attention to whether or not they later regress, and do not worry about whether they do the practice or not, for this is doubtless the true Teaching of our Venerable Shakyamuni.

> The Buddha, in instructing His monks, once said, "By all means, you need to keep in mind that Lord Yama gave the following teaching,[22] 'Some day I shall be free of this suffering of mine. I shall be reborn among those in the world of humans. Obtaining a human body, I will be able to leave home life behind, have my head shaved, receive the kesa of the Three Treasures, and learn the Way as one who has left home life behind.' Even a Lord Yama had these thoughts. And what is even more, you now have received the body of a human being and have had the opportunity to become monks! Because of this, my monks, you should consciously work on the actions of your body,

22. Lord Yama is the Lord of the Dead.

> speech, and mind, and do not allow faults to exist in them. By all means, you need to eliminate the five fetters and put into practice the five good roots.[23] Monks like you should certainly do just such training."
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> At this time the monks, having heard what the Buddha expressed through words, were filled with joy and devotedly undertook to act upon them.

It is clear that the desire to be reborn within the human world is something longed for even by a Lord Yama. Once someone has been reborn as a human being, he or she should forthwith have their head shaved, don the kesa of the Three Treasures, and take up the study of the Way of the Buddha. These are the merits of being within the world of humans, which surpasses the other five worlds of existence. But to be born in the human world and then to wantonly seek out the path to political power or some other worldly career, vainly spending one's life as a toady to ministers and kings, wrapping oneself up in fantasies and dreams, only to proceed in later times towards pitch darkness without anything to rely upon, that is folly indeed! Not only have you received the body of a human being, which is hard to come by, but you have also encountered the Buddha Dharma, which is hard to encounter. You should forthwith cast aside all your involvements and quickly leave home life behind in order to study the Way. Rulers and ministers, along with their wives and children, their relatives and households, are encountered everywhere, but the Buddha Dharma, like the rare udumbara blossom, is hard to meet up with. In short, when impermanence suddenly arrives, there is no ruler or minister, friend or relative, spouse or child, or any precious treasure that will save us, for each of us simply returns to death's Yellow Spring alone.[24] What follows along with us is simply our good and bad karma. When we are about to lose our human body, our feelings of regret for our human body may well be deep indeed! So, while we still have our human body, we should quickly leave home life behind. Just this alone will be the true Teaching of the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds.

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23. The five fetters are covetousness, hate, arrogant pride, envy, and mean-spiritedness. The five good roots are faith, diligent effort, mindfulness, meditative contemplation, and wise discernment.

24. The Yellow Spring is the Chinese equivalent of the River Styx, the river in Greek mythology that one crosses at death.

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For those who have left home life behind in order to put the Dharma into practice, there are four things called 'the four necessities'.[25]

> *The first is to go so far in one's fleshly life as to sit beneath a tree.*
> *The second is to go so far in one's fleshly life as to wear robes made of discarded cloth.*
> *The third is to go so far in one's fleshly life as to beg for one's food.*
> *The fourth is to go so far in one's fleshly life as to take the long-abandoned, old-fashioned remedies, when physically ill.*[26]

> If you practice all these methods, you may indeed be called one who has left home life behind and, in being given that name, you have become a member of the Sangha. If you do not practice these, you have not become what we call a member of the Sangha. For that reason, these four are called the practice of the Dharma by those who have left home life behind.

Now, what the Buddhas and Ancestors in India and China have authentically Transmitted is leaving home life behind in order to put the Dharma into practice. Those who spend their life without leaving the monastery even once are supplied with these four necessities so that they may put the Dharma into practice. This is what I call 'practicing the four necessities'. Should someone alter this by trying to establish a fifth necessity, you need to know that this is a false teaching.[27] Who could accept it in good faith? Who could bear to hear such a thing? What the Buddhas and Ancestors have correctly Transmitted, <u>that</u> is the true Teaching. Accordingly, those human beings who have left home life behind are supremely

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25. That is, the four necessities for sustaining life: shelter, clothing, food, and medicine.

26. The passage that Dōgen is citing comes from a seventh century text describing the ideal for a Mahayana monk. The four examples given represent the extremes to which a monk should be willing to go in order to continue on as someone who has left home life behind. All four represent practices that, in the Buddha's time, could sustain a monk's existence without requiring him or her to return to lay life. The long-abandoned, old-fashioned remedies alluded to include the ancient Indian medical practice of using the urine and dung of cattle for sterilization as well as for a variety of internal and external ailments.

27. The so-called 'fifth necessity' is sex.

fortunate and most worthy of our veneration. For this reason, Nanda, Ananda, Devadatta, Aniruddha, Mahānāma, and Bhadrika, all of whom were grandsons of King Simhahanu and were of the most noble in the warrior caste in India, quickly left home life behind, which should be an excellent example for succeeding generations.[28] Those who are not warriors today should not regret who they are. For those who may well not be princes, what can there possibly be to regret? The noblest of families in Jambudvipa ended up as the noblest in the human realms, that is, they left home life behind. Rulers of lesser nations, like those of the Licchavi multitudes, were wont to prize that which is not worth prizing, to flaunt what is not worth flaunting, to confine themselves to what is not worth abiding with, and not to leave home life behind.[29] Who could fail to see that they were bunglers? Who could fail to see that they were foolish people?

The Venerable Rahula was the son of the Bodhisattva.[30] And he was the great-grandson of King Simhahanu, who would have bequeathed the throne to him were it not for the World-honored One's influencing him to leave home life behind. You need to know that the Dharma of leaving home life behind is the most venerated. As the disciple foremost in keeping to the Precepts, Rahula has yet to enter nirvana. Even to this day, as an arhat he helps human beings to abide in this world as in a cultivated field of happiness.

Among our Indian Ancestral Masters to whom the Buddha's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching was Transmitted, there has been an abundance of princes who left home life behind. Our first Ancestor in China, Bodhidharma, was the third son of the King of the Indian state of Kōshi. Not taking his royal position as something of importance, he received the Transmission of the true Teaching and held to It. It should be clear to you that he held leaving home life behind in greatest veneration. While he may not have held a station that was the equal of those other princes, he was in a position where he was able to leave home life behind. So why would he not hasten to do so? What kind of tomorrow should he have waited for? Were he to leave home life behind right off, not waiting to inhale and exhale a single breath, that would be wise indeed. Also, keep in mind that our Master, one who has left home life behind and accepted the Precepts, is due the same gratitude and appreciation which we owe to our parents.

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28. Simhahanu was Siddhārtha's grandfather on his father's side.

29. The Licchavis were thought to be among the earliest supporters of the Buddha, but not to the extent that they left home life behind.

30. The Bodhisattva here is Prince Siddhārtha prior to his enlightenment.

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It says in the first fascicle of the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple:*

> All Buddhas in the three temporal worlds—past, present, and future—affirm that to leave home life behind is to realize the Truth. The twenty-eight Indian Ancestors and the six Chinese Ancestors, all of whom Transmitted the Buddha's Mind seal,* were, each and every one of them, monastics. Most likely, it was because they strictly observed the monastic regulations that they were able to become outstanding models for those in the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form. Thus, in practicing meditation and inquiring of the Way with their Master, they made the Precepts and the monastic regulations foremost. Had they not distanced themselves from their faults and guarded against misdeeds, how could they have realized Buddhahood and become an Ancestor?

Even if one's monastery has become subject to the winds of decay, it may still be a grove of fragrant trees in full bloom, a grove that has not fallen to the level of ordinary trees or commonplace sproutings. Then again, it may be like milk diluted with water. When we want to make use of milk, we should use this milk that has been diluted with water, but we should not use any other substance.[31]

Thus, what is most revered is the genuine Transmission of what all Buddhas in the three temporal worlds teach as the Dharma of leaving home life behind. Furthermore, there has never been a single Buddha of the three temporal worlds who failed to leave home life behind, for this is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana and supreme enlightenment, as accurately Transmitted from Buddha to Buddha and from Ancestor to Ancestor.

A day during the summer retreat in the seventh year of the Kenchō era (1255).

Copied here on the sixth day of the eighth lunar month in the third year of the Enkyō era (August 30, 1310).

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31. That is, even though milk may be diluted with water, it is still milk. This is a metaphor for the Dharma. Undiluted milk refers to the Dharma in its purest form. Diluted milk refers to the Dharma that has been simplified to make it more accessible to people, but it is still the Buddha Dharma.

83

On Receiving the Precepts

(Jukai)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse, Dōgen presents the ceremony of taking the Mahayana Precepts. In the Sōtō Zen tradition, the form of these Mahayana Precepts derives from the *Scripture of Brahma's Net*. They are traditionally given to the laity when they decide that they wish to live their lives as Buddhists, to those who are being ordained as novice monks, and to a novice monk as part of the ceremonial associated with Transmission. These Bodhisattva Precepts are distinct from the 250 preceptual regulations for male monastics and the 348 preceptual regulations for female monastics, which address everyday problems that may arise for those living in a monastic or hermetic setting.

In the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple* it says the following:

> All Buddhas in the three temporal worlds—past, present, and future—affirm that to leave home life behind is to realize the Truth. The twenty-eight Indian Ancestors and the six Chinese Ancestors, all of whom Transmitted the Buddha's Mind seal,* were, each and every one of them, monastics. Most likely, it was because they strictly observed the monastic regulations that they were able to become outstanding models for those in the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form. Thus, in practicing meditation and inquiring of the Way with their Master, they made the Precepts and the monastic regulations foremost. Had they not distanced themselves from their faults and guarded against misdeeds, how could they have realized Buddhahood and become Ancestors?
>
> As to the method for doing the ordination ceremony of Taking the Precepts, three types of kesas* and a set of mealtime bowls, along with fresh, clean robes, are provided for the one to be ordained. If new robes are not available, be sure to launder old ones, but you must not use borrowed kesas or a borrowed bowl set to put on the altar when doing the ceremony of Taking the Precepts. Concentrate wholeheartedly and take care not to get distracted by side issues.

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* See *Glossary*.

> Assuming the form of a Buddha, being provided with the Precepts and the monastic regulations, and acquiring what the Buddha received and made use of are, by no means, small matters, so how could you possibly treat them lightly? Were you to borrow someone's kesas or bowl set, and then go up to the altar to take the Precepts, you would not really be obtaining the Precepts. Should you never receive the Precepts, you will be a person devoid of the Precepts for the whole of your life as you vainly cross over the threshold of empty scholasticism, meaninglessly accepting alms given in good faith. Those entering the path with a beginner's mind may not as yet have memorized the rules and regulations. Should their Master offer no guidance, they will lapse into error. What I am saying here is stern advice indeed. Dare I hope that you will engrave it on your heart? If you have taken the monastic Precepts, by all means you should also take the Bodhisattva* Precepts, for They are foremost for those who would enter the Teaching.

In India and China, whenever an Ancestor of the Buddha passed on the Transmission, without fail, the Precepts were accepted as the first act of entering the Dharma. Unless we accept the Precepts, we are not yet a disciple of the Buddhas, nor are we an offspring of our Ancestral Masters, because They have considered one's departing from error and resisting wrong to be synonymous with practicing meditation and inquiring of the Way. The words, "They have made the Precepts foremost," are already precisely what the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching is. Realizing Buddhahood and becoming an Ancestor have invariably been based on receiving and preserving the Transmission of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. Ancestral Masters who have authentically Transmitted the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching have invariably received and preserved the Buddha's Precepts. There cannot be an Ancestor of the Buddha who has not received and preserved the Precepts. There are Those who received and preserved them in compliance with the Tathagata, and there are Those who received and preserved them in compliance with a disciple of the Buddha, all of whom received the bloodline thereby.

The Buddhist Precepts, which have now been authentically Transmitted from Buddha to Buddha and from Ancestor to Ancestor, were Transmitted only by our Ancestral Founder Bodhidharma, the Abbot of Mount Sūzan, until They came down through five Transmissions in China to our Founding Ancestor of Mount Sōkei, Daikan Enō. Although the genuine Transmission of Seigen Gyōshi and Nangaku Ejō and beyond has been conveyed to us of the present day, there are

those senior monks who have never recognized the Precepts and could care less. Oh, how extremely pitiful they are!

As has been said, we should receive and accept the Bodhisattva Precepts, for this is how we reach the entryway into the Dharma. This is something that we need to know in our exploration through our practice with our Master. This procedure of receiving and accepting the Bodhisattva Precepts has invariably been correctly Transmitted to those of us who have explored the Matter* through our long-standing training within the private quarters of an Ancestor of the Buddha. It is not something that those who are lazy or indifferent achieve. This procedure invariably involves lighting incense and doing prostrations before our Ancestral Master Bodhidharma, and then asking if we may receive the Bodhisattva Precepts. Once we have been given permission, we bathe that we may purify ourselves. We then put on clean, new robes. Or, we may wash our previous robes, strew flowers, burn incense, and perform prostrations to show our reverence, after which we put those robes on. We respectfully bow to the altar images, to the Three Treasures, and to our venerable Ancestors, ridding ourselves of any obstructions. Thereby we can purify our body and mind. This procedure has been accurately Transmitted for ever so long from within the private quarters of Ancestors of the Buddha. After this, the presiding teacher of the Monks' Training Hall invites the ordinand to make a prostration and then recite the following refuges, while kneeling upright with hands in gasshō:*

I humbly take refuge in the Buddha,
I humbly take refuge in the Dharma,
I humbly take refuge in the Sangha.

I humbly take refuge in the Buddha, the most venerated among humans,
I humbly take refuge in the Dharma, the most venerated among those who have forsaken their passions,
I humbly take refuge in the Sangha, the most venerated among those in our assemblies.

I have taken refuge in the Buddha,
I have taken refuge in the Dharma,
I have taken refuge in the Sangha.

(Repeat the above refuges three times.)

Ordinand: "The Truth of the supreme, fully perfected enlightenment which was realized by the Tathagata is my great Teacher, in which I will take refuge from now on. From now on, I

shall not seek refuge in the demons of heresy or in those outside the Way, because I shall have His compassion and benevolence."

(Repeat the above words three times. After the third time, repeat three more times the line "I shall have His compassion and benevolence.")

Preceptor: "Good disciple, you have discarded past evils and been converted to the Truth. The Precepts have already embraced you. Now you are about to receive the Three Pure Precepts.

"The first is the Precept of Ceasing from Evil. From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "The second is the Precept of Doing Only Good. From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "The third is the Precept of Doing What Is Good for the Sake of All Sentient Beings. From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "You must not violate the preceding Three Pure Precepts. From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep these Precepts or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "This is how you must keep Them."

The ordinand then does three prostrations, ending by kneeling straight up with hand in gasshō.

Preceptor: "Good disciple, you have already received the Three Pure Precepts. Now you are about to receive the Ten Great Precepts. These are the Great Immaculate Precepts of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

"The first is 'Do not kill.' From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "The second is 'Do not steal.' From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "The third is 'Do not covet.' From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "The fourth is 'Do not say that which is untrue.' From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "The fifth is 'Do not sell the wine of delusion.' From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "The sixth is 'Do not speak against others, be they laity or monastics.' From this present state of yours to that of Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "The seventh is 'Do not be proud of yourself and devalue others.' From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "The eighth is 'Do not be mean in giving either Dharma or material possessions.' From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "The ninth is 'Do not be angry.' From this present state of yours to that of Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times)

Preceptor: "The tenth is 'Do not defame the Three Treasures.' From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?"

Ordinand: "I will keep It."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "The preceding Three Refuges, Three Pure Precepts, and Ten Great Precepts are what all Buddhas receive and keep to. From this present state of yours to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep these Precepts or not?"

Ordinand: "I will."

(Asked three times, answered three times.)

Preceptor: "These are what you should keep to."

The ordinand does three prostrations, coming back to kneeling straight up with hands in gasshō. The Preceptor and the ordinand together then chant the following verse in Sanskrit:

We live in the world as if in the sky,
Just as the lotus blossom is not wetted by the water that surrounds it.
The mind is immaculate and beyond the dust.
Let us bow to the highest Lord.

When this is finished, they recite the following:

Homage to the Buddha,
Homage to the Dharma,
Homage to the Sangha.

The ordinand then leaves the Training Hall.

❀

This ceremony of receiving the Precepts is what the Buddhas and Ancestors have, beyond question, correctly Transmitted to us. Such trainees as Yakusan Igen's disciple Tanka Tennen, as well as his novice Kō, both received and kept to Them. Even though there have been Ancestral Masters who did not take the two hundred and fifty monastic precepts, there has never been an Ancestral Master who failed to take these Bodhisattva Precepts, which the Buddhas and Ancestors authentically Transmitted. And it is These that we invariably receive and preserve.

84

On the Spiritual Merits of the Kesa

(Kesa Kudoku)

Translator's Introduction: One element that is markedly different between this discourse and Discourse 12: On the Transmission of the Kesa *(Den'e)* is that the present discourse has several extensive quotes from Chinese translations of Scriptural writings which Dōgen uses to clarify and support his points.

The robe and the Teaching which Buddhas have directly passed on to Buddhas, and Ancestors to Ancestors, were, beyond doubt, correctly Transmitted to China by Bodhidharma, our noble Ancestor of Mount Sūzan, and by him alone. This noble Ancestor was of the twenty-eighth generation from Shakyamuni Buddha. In India, he was the twenty-eighth in line to have legitimately received the Transmission, and, as the Twenty-eighth Ancestor, he came to China where he became known as the First Chinese Ancestor. Those of Chinese nationality made five Transmissions until coming to Daikan Enō, who became the thirty-third generation Ancestor, and was called the Sixth Chinese Ancestor. Known as the Thirty-third Ancestor Meditation Master Daikan Enō, he received the genuine Transmission of the robe and the Teaching in the middle of the night whilst on Mount Ōbai. He watched over and protected the robe for the rest of his life, and it is still enshrined in Hōrin-ji Temple on Mount Sōkei.

Successive generations of Chinese emperors have respectfully requested that this robe be brought to their court so that they might make offerings and reverently bow to it. They are persons who, as spiritual guardians, have protected it. During the T'ang dynasty, the emperors Chung-tsung, Su-tsung, and T'ai-tsung repeatedly had it brought back to court so that they might make offerings to it. Whenever they requested it or had it sent back, they would have an emissary accompany it and would issue an edict to that effect. On one occasion, Emperor T'ai-tsung, in returning the Buddha's robe to Mount Sōkei, issued the following edict, "I am now pleased to entrust to Commander General Liu Chung-ching, Pacifier of Our Nation, the returning of this robe with all courtesies. We declare this robe to be a national treasure. Venerable Abbot, I pray that you will safely enshrine it in your temple, placing it under the rigorous care and protection of those monks of your

community who have personally received from you the tenets of our religion, never letting the robe fall into neglect."

Truly, it would be better than having sway over the three-thousand great-thousandfold worlds—which are as countless as the sands of the Ganges—just to have the opportunity, as ruler of some small, present-day country, to actually see the Buddha's robe and make venerative offerings to it, for such would truly be a good life within one's cycle of birth and death; it would, indeed, be the ultimate in one's life.

Surely, nowhere within the three thousand worlds in which the influence of Buddhism has extended has the kesa* been absent. Be that as it may, the only one to receive the Buddha's kesa that had been passed on from person to person, from successor to successor, was our Ancestor of Mount Sūzan in times long gone. The Buddha's kesa was not accorded to any other, subsidiary disciple. Even though the Transmission through the Bodhisattva* Bhadrapala, a subsidiary descendant of the Twenty-seventh Ancestor, was, beyond doubt, extended to Dharma Teacher Jō in the fifth century, the genuine passing on of the Buddha's kesa was not involved. Likewise, the Fourth Chinese Ancestor, Great Master Daii Dōshin, ferried Meditation Master Hōyū of Mount Gozu to the Other Shore, but he did not pass the Buddha's kesa on to him. Well, even though someone may not have received Transmission from a direct heir, nevertheless, the Tathagata's genuine Dharma is never devoid of spiritual merit, so for thousands, nay, myriads of eons, Its benefits will be great and far reaching. And, obviously, anyone who has not been Transmitted is not to be considered comparable to someone who has been Transmitted by a direct heir.

Thus, if commoners or those of more lofty status were to accept and keep to a kesa, they would need to have passed on to them the genuine Transmission which the Buddhas and Ancestors have passed on. In India and China, during those periods of the genuine and the superficial teaching of the Dharma, householders still kept to the kesa that they had accepted. But now, in these weak and degenerate times in a remote land like ours, those who shave their heads and beards and call themselves disciples of the Buddha do not keep to the kesa that they have received. Alas, they still do not believe, or know, or clearly understand that they should keep to what they have accepted, to say nothing of their lack of knowledge about its materials, colors, or measurements, much less of the ways to wear one.

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* See *Glossary.*

❀

The kesa, from ancient times, has been called 'the garment of liberation', for it can free us from all our obstructions, be they from the karmic* effects of our past deeds, from our defiling passions, or from the effects of our rebirth in one of the six worlds* of existence. Should a dragon be able to obtain a single thread from a kesa, it will be delivered from its three forms of burning pain.[1] Should an ox be able to touch a kesa with even one horn, its past defilements will spontaneously disappear. Upon realizing Buddhahood, every Buddha, without exception, was wearing a kesa, which is obviously why wearing one is described as the most venerable and highest of spiritual merits.

True, we have been born in a remote country and have been exposed to the Dharma in Its final days, sad to say, but even so, in that we have encountered the robe and the Teaching as received by Buddha after Buddha for generation after generation, what greater joy could there be? Which other tradition has correctly Transmitted both the robe and the Dharma of the Venerable Shakyamuni as we have straightforwardly Transmitted them? Even if, in the space of a single day, we were to renounce our physical life for times as countless as the sands of the Ganges, we should still humbly make offerings to both the robe and the Dharma. Indeed, we should vow that, upon encountering them in life after life, for generation after generation, we will humbly raise them above our head, make offerings to them, and venerate them.

Even though we are separated from the Buddha's native land by more than a hundred thousand leagues of mountains and seas too difficult to traverse, nevertheless, spurred on by our good deeds in some past life, these mountains and seas do not stand as obstacles blocking our way, nor have we ever been dismissed or shunned as muddle-headed, ignorant provincials. Having respectfully encountered this genuine Teaching, we put It into practice day and night to the best of our ability; keeping to this kesa which we have respectfully accepted, we guard and protect it, constantly taking joy in it. How could this possibly be due to the cultivation of spiritual merits under the tutelage of just one or two Buddhas? It must be due wholly to the cultivation of all kinds of spiritual merits under the tutelage of Buddhas as numerous as the sands of the Ganges. Even if it were due to our own efforts, we should feel respect for the robe and the Dharma and should enjoy heartfelt gratitude. We should cordially show our gratitude to the ancestral Masters for their profound kindness in Transmitting the Dharma to us. Since even

1. Namely, suffering from fiery heat, from fierce desert winds, and from being devoured by a garuda bird.

animals repay kindliness, how could humans fail to understand kindness? If people do not recognize kindness, they must be even denser than animals.

When it comes to the spiritual merits of this Buddha robe and this Buddha Dharma, if there had not been Ancestral Masters who Transmitted the Buddha's True Dharma, then the rest of us would not yet be able to clarify, much less comprehend, what these merits are. If you are able to take delight in seeking out the trail left by the Buddhas, you will enjoy this Dharma all the more.

Even after a hundred thousand myriad generations, people will be able to recognize this genuine Transmission as the genuine Transmission. This will be the Buddha Dharma; the proof of Its authenticity will undoubtedly be evident.

❀

Do not liken the Transmission to adding water to milk, since It more closely resembles a crown prince ascending to the throne. When we do make use of milk, even though it is that which has been diluted with water, we should still go ahead and use it if there should happen to be no other milk than that. Even if we have not added water to it, we should not use oil in its place, or lacquer, or wine.[2] The genuine Transmission may also be likened to this analogy. Even though someone is a run-of-the-mill disciple of a mediocre teacher, if there is a genuine Transmission, it will be a suitable time to 'make use of milk'. But the genuine Transmission of Buddha to Buddha and Ancestor to Ancestor is more like the enthronement of a crown prince. Even the secular Confucian teachings admonish us not to wear clothing which differs from that officially worn during the time of the previous ruler, so why would a disciple of the Buddha wear any type of robe other than that which the Buddha wore?

❀

Starting in the tenth year of the Eihei era (67 C.E.), during the reign of the Later Han dynasty emperor Hsiao-ming, monks and lay disciples went back and forth between India in the west and their homelands in the east, ceaselessly following on the heels of their predecessors, as they say. Even so, none of them reported encountering in India an Ancestral Master of the genuine Transmission from Buddha to Buddha and from Ancestor to Ancestor; none of these travelers had a record of the lineage of the Face-to-Face Transmission direct from the Tathagata. They just attended on teachers of Scriptures and Scriptural commentaries, and brought back copies of Scriptures and scholarly texts written in Sanskrit. Among them, none spoke of having met an Ancestral Master who was a

2. Because milk is still milk even in a diluted form.

genuine heir of the Buddha Dharma, nor did anyone report the existence of an Ancestral Master who had passed on to them the Buddha's kesa. It is quite clear that they had not crossed the threshold into the deeper significance of the term 'Buddha Dharma'. People like these have not clearly grasped the import of the phrase 'the genuine Transmission of the Buddhas and Ancestors'.

❀

When the Tathagata Shakyamuni conferred on Makakashō the Dharma of Supreme Wisdom—which is the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching—He passed on to him at the same time the kesa that Kashō Buddha had directly Transmitted to Him. It is the kesa that generation after generation of genuine heirs received down to Meditation Master Daikan of Mount Sōkei, who was the thirty-third heir. The material, color, and dimensions of that kesa have been passed on first-hand. Since then, the Dharma descendants of Seigen and Nangaku have directly Transmitted the Dharma in person, employing the ways taught by the Ancestors for wearing a kesa, and following the methods taught by the Ancestors for constructing them.[3] If someone has not learned the deeper meaning behind the method for washing and cleansing a kesa, as well as the procedure for accepting and keeping to one—both of which have been conferred face-to-face through the generations of successors—there is no way for that person to know of them.

❀

The kesa is said to be of three types: the five-paneled robe, the seven-paneled robe, and the large robe of nine or more panels. Even those whose practice is the very finest accept just these three robes; they do not hoard additional robes. They use just these three robes, which are sufficient for their bodily needs.

When conducting daily business or attending to daily duties within the monastery, or when going outside to see to large or small matters, we wear a five-paneled robe. Upon our entering among the Sangha to engage in all manner of good spiritual acts,[4] we wear a seven-paneled robe. To help inculcate respect and trust whilst giving Teaching to both commoners and those in lofty positions, we should, by all means, wear a large robe of nine or more panels. Also, when alone in our quarters, we wear the five-paneled robe; when coming together with the

3. Seigen and Nangaku were both direct Dharma heirs of Daikan Enō, thereby forming two branches within the Zen tradition.

4. A reference to one's joining with fellow members of the Sangha for formal meditation periods and religious ceremonies.

Sangha, we wear the seven-paneled robe; when we enter a ruler's residence or go into a populous area, we should, by all means, wear the large robe. Further, in accord with times of warm weather, we wear the five-paneled robe; when the weather turns cold, we add the seven-paneled robe; and when the cold becomes intense, we also add on the large robe.

Once, in days long gone, as a mid-winter night came on, the weather turned so cold that it cracked open the bamboo. At eventide, the Tathagata was wearing a five-paneled robe. As the night grew more and more chill, He added a seven-paneled robe. In the final hours of the night, the cold weather had grown ever more intense, so He added on His large robe. The Buddha immediately had the thought, "In the generations yet to come, all good disciples who find the cold unbearable will be able to wrap themselves up sufficiently with these three robes."

❀

The Methods for Wearing the Kesa

The usual method is to keep the right shoulder bare. There is a method of wearing the kesa over both shoulders, which was a custom of the Tathagata and of the more elderly and senior monks.[5] Although it is described simply as 'covering both shoulders', there are times when the chest is exposed, and times when the chest is covered. The covering of both shoulders is a time for wearing a large kesa of at least sixty pieces.[6]

When wearing an ordinary kesa, we bring both upper corners together at the left arm and shoulder, placing one atop the other. We bring the left edge to the front, letting it ride atop the right vertical edge which has been tucked in between the left arm and the torso; the left edge is draped over the left arm.[7] With a large kesa, we put the front corner over the left shoulder and drape it so that it hangs down in back. In addition to these methods, there are various other methods for wearing a kesa, which you should look into as part of your training and practice.

During the centuries of the Chinese Liang, Ch'en, Sui, T'ang, and Sung dynasties, many of the scholars of both the Greater* and the Lesser Courses* abandoned their preoccupation with lecturing on Scriptures, realizing that this was not the ultimate goal. Faring on, they strove to explore the Teaching of the genuine Transmission of the Buddhas and Ancestors, at which time they invariably

5. The word Dōgen uses for 'elderly' implies age fifty and over.

6. The sixty-piece robe refers to a fifteen-paneled kesa.

7. Dōgen gives a somewhat more detailed description of this method in the preceding Discourse 12: On the Transmission of the Kesa *(Den'e)*, p. 128.

discarded their previous worldly clothing and took on the kesa that the Buddhas and Ancestors had correctly passed on. This was truly their abandonment of what was false and their return to what was upright.

❀

The True Teaching of the Tathagata originated in India, as we all know. Many past and present teachers have held to the shallow views of common folk, which are colored by emotionalism and narrow-mindedness. Because the Realm of Buddha and the realms of sentient beings are beyond such notions as 'having limits' or 'being without limits', the Teachings, practices, and reasoning of both the Greater and Lesser Courses will not fit within the narrow-minded thinking of common folk today. And, at the same time, there are those in China who absurdly argue that India was not the source, but that China was, and they put forth this parochial view as their own bright new idea, taking it to be Buddha Dharma. As a consequence, if those today who have awakened to their Buddha Nature are determined to accept and keep to the kesa, they should accept and keep to the genuinely Transmitted kesa; they should not accept or keep to some kesa fashioned according to someone's 'bright new idea'.

The 'genuinely Transmitted kesa' refers to the one genuinely Transmitted from Shōrin-ji Monastery through Mount Sōkei, and it is the one that has been received by generation after generation of the Tathagata's successors without missing even a single generation.[8] What those disciples of the Dharma and their Dharma disciples wore is, precisely, the genuinely Transmitted kesa. What has been newly fashioned in China is not of the genuine Transmission. Now, the members of the monastic assembly who came from India all wore the same style of kesa as that which was genuinely Transmitted by the Buddhas and Ancestors; not even one of those monks ever wore a kesa like those new-fangled Chinese ones which were fashioned by that bunch who devote themselves to a scholarly study of the monastic regulations. Ill-informed folk may trust the kesa of scholastics; those who are clear-minded toss it aside.

❀

Broadly speaking, the spiritual merits of the kesa—which was passed on from Buddha to Buddha and Ancestor to Ancestor—are clear, and these merits are easy to accept and trust in. The kesa's genuine Transmission has been duly inherited; its original form has been personally handed down, and it actually exists

8. Shōrin-ji Monastery is associated with Bodhidharma and Mount Sōkei with Daikan Enō.

here and now. The practice of accepting and keeping to it has come down to the present, along with the inherited Dharma. The Ancestral Masters who have received and kept to it, as both Masters and disciples, are all ones who have realized the same Truth and Transmitted Its Dharma. As a consequence, we should construct our kesas according to the methods correctly passed on by the Buddhas and Ancestors, because Their method alone is of the genuine Transmission. This is what everyone has long come to know and understand, be they everyday folk or saintly ones, commoners or lofty ones, dragons or deities.

The kesa came into being to accord with the dissemination of the Dharma. Once it has been wrapped around a body and accepted, and is being kept to for a second—or even a flash of a moment—it will become a veritable amulet, safeguarding us in our resolve to realize Supreme Wisdom.[9] Should we imbue our trusting heart with a single line of Scripture or with the whole of the kesa verse, It will be a seed for our bright-mindedness for lengthy eons to come, and will ultimately take us to Supreme Wisdom. Moreover, if we infuse our body and mind with a single Teaching or a single good practice, the result will be the same. The thoughts in our mind arise and disappear moment after moment, yet nary a one permanently abides; our body is being born and is ceasing moment after moment, yet nowhere is there a place where it permanently abides. Nevertheless, the spiritual merits of our practice will undoubtedly have their time of fruition, which will liberate us. So the kesa is not simply a manufactured thing, nor is it something that spontaneously arises in nature, nor is it something that has always existed somewhere, nor is it something that exists nowhere: it is That which Buddhas, and Buddhas alone, all ultimately realize. Be that as it may, the spiritual merits from what is realized by practitioners who accept and keep to the kesa will undoubtedly come to full fruition, and will undoubtedly take them to the Ultimate. As to those who have sown no good seeds previously, even if they were to undergo one or two lifetimes more, up through immeasurable lifetimes, they would not be able to see a kesa, or wear a kesa, or accept a kesa with a trusting heart, or clearly understand what a kesa really is. If we look at China and Japan today, we will see that there are people unable to do so, but not because they are rich or poor, nor because they are dim-witted or sharp. Clearly, the wearing of a kesa is due to the sowing of good seeds in the past.

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9. Dōgen is not asserting that the kesa has some inherent magical property which wards off evil; rather, it protects the wearer by serving as a constant reminder of the purpose for which he or she donned the robe in the first place, as well as serving as an outer sign to others of the wearer's spiritual commitment.

As a consequence, those who accept and keep to the kesa should rejoice in their having sown good seeds in the past, and should not doubt that they have piled up merits and accumulated virtues. Those who have not yet acquired a kesa should aspire to one and, right away in this life, busy themselves with planting good seeds. Those who are unable to accept and keep to it due to some spiritual impediment, should, out of shame and remorse, admit their failings to all the Buddhas and Tathagatas, as well as to the Triple Treasure of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. How sentient beings in other countries must wish that the Tathagata's robe and Dharma had been directly Transmitted to them in the same way as They were Transmitted in China, and that They were now present in their country too! What a deep sense of embarrassment they must feel; what sorrow and regret they must have that there has been no genuine Transmission in their country. Through what good fortune have we encountered the Teaching whereby the World-honored Tathagata directly Transmitted the robe and the Dharma? Surely, it is due to the agency of great spiritual merits accumulated from past lives that were spent in training to realize True Wisdom.

❀

In this present-day, degenerate world when the Dharma is in Its last phase, some feel no shame for themselves that they lack the genuine Transmission, while others envy or resent those who have received the genuine Transmission. I suspect that these people may well be a gang of hellions. The way things are for them now and the state in which they now dwell have sprung from their previous deeds and are not what is truly real. Were they to turn themselves around and simply respect the genuine Transmission of the Buddha Dharma, then this would be to really take refuge in learning what Buddha is.

❀

Broadly speaking, we must realize that the kesa is what all Buddhas revere and devote themselves to. It is the Body of Buddha; it is the Mind of Buddha. It is called 'the garment of liberation'; it is called 'the robe that is a fertile field of blessings'; it is called 'the formless robe'; it is called 'the unsurpassed robe'; it is called 'the robe of patient forbearance'; it is called 'the robe of a Tathagata'; it is called 'the robe of great benevolence and great compassion'; it is called 'the robe that is the banner of victory'; it is called 'the robe of supreme, fully perfected enlightenment'. Truly, in these ways we should accept it, keep to it, and humbly raise it above our heads. Because it <u>is</u> as it is spoken of, it is not something to be altered to make it conform to some personal fancy.

❀

As to the material for a robe, we use silk or cotton cloth, as it suits us. Cotton is not necessarily 'pure', any more than silk is 'impure'. And to choose silk because you look down on cotton is unwarranted, laughable even. The usual approach of the Buddhas has been, beyond doubt, to consider a robe made from waste cloth as the best.

There are ten types of waste cloth, four of which are charred cloth, cloth that has been chewed by an ox, cloth that rats have gnawed on, and cloth that was previously used for a shroud. People in all five regions of India discard such types of cloth in back alleys and barren fields. Since they are considered the same as bodily waste, they are called 'waste cloth'. Trainees collect them, wash and dye them, then sew them together and use the robe for furbishing their body. Among these are various scraps of silk and cotton. Trainees should abandon any discriminatory notions about silk and cotton, and concentrate on the meaning of 'discarded waste material'. Long ago, when the Buddha was in one of His past lives, He was washing a robe of just such waste cloth in Lake Anavatapta. The dragon who was the lord of the lake praised Him, rained flowers down upon Him, and respectfully bowed to Him. In addition, there are some among the Scriptural teachers of the Lesser Course who hold to the theory of transformed thread,[10] a view which has no foundation and at which persons of the Greater Course must smile, for what thread is not the product of some form of transformation? O you ancient scholarly teachers, even though you may believe your ears when you hear the word 'transformation', you doubt your eyes when you actually see a transformation.

Obviously, when you are picking up waste material, it may include cotton that resembles silk and silk that resembles cotton. Regional customs differ in myriad ways, so that there is no telling how something was manufactured, for it is not something that the naked eye can readily determine. Once we have obtained such material, we should not argue over whether it is silk or cotton, but should refer to it as discarded waste. Even though ordinary humans or lofty beings may 'continue to exist' as waste matter after death, they will not be sentient beings, they will simply be waste matter. Even though a dead pine tree or chrysanthemum should 'continue to exist' as waste matter, they will not be non-sentient beings, they will just be waste matter. O you ancient scholarly ones, when you accept and trust in the principle that waste material does not mean silk or cotton, or gold or

10. An ancient Indian view that silk is thread which is created by a living creature; it is not naturally occurring of itself.

silver, or jade or jewels, waste material will be what manifests before your very eyes. Since you had not yet let go of your opinions about silk and cotton, waste material was something you had not even dreamt of.

❀

> A certain monk once asked the ancient Buddha Daikan Enō, "Is the robe passed on to you on Huang-mei Mountain in the middle of the night one made of cotton or one made of silk? Pray, tell me, what on earth is it made of?"
>
> The ancient Buddha replied, "It is not cotton, nor is it silk."

Understand that a kesa is neither silk nor cotton. This instruction on the Buddha's Way is profound and difficult to grasp.

The Venerable Shōnawashu ('He of Hempen Clothing') was the Third Indian Ancestor connected with the Treasure House of the Dharma. From the time he was born, he spent his whole life inseparable from his robe. This robe was, to be sure, a conventional garment whilst he was still at home, but when he left home to become a monk, it became a kesa.

Also, once the female monk Shukra ('She Who is Spotless') had taken her Bodhisattva vows and put on the cotton robe, then, life after life, even during the periods between lives, she was inseparable from the robe. On that very day when she met Shakyamuni Buddha and left home to become a monk, the ordinary robe that she had acquired at birth was immediately transformed into a kesa, the same as with the Venerable Shōnawashu.

Be very clear about this: a kesa is beyond being silk or cotton or any other type of cloth. Moreover, the spiritual merits of the Buddha Dharma transform all thoughts and things, physical and mental, just as in these examples. The principle is unambiguous: when you leave home to take the Precepts and become a monk, whatever your body and mind experience as objective or subjective is transformed. It is only because you are confused or ignorant that you do not realize this. None of the Buddhas ever taught that this principle applied only to Shōnawashu and Shukra, and therefore does not apply to you. So, have no doubts about the many spiritual benefits that <u>you</u> receive. Obviously, you should assiduously explore such a principle as the one just described.

❀

The kesa that someone dons when taking the Precepts is not necessarily of cotton or of silk, for indeed the Buddha's edifying influence is difficult to comprehend. The precious Jewel within is beyond anything that those who

calculate grains of sand are capable of finding.[11] So, we should probe deeply to clarify what has dimensions and what is beyond measurement, as well as what has a form and what is beyond form. This is what our Ancestral Masters who traveled to and from India and China investigated and correctly Transmitted. Should a person encounter and listen to someone who is doubtlessly making clear the genuine Transmission of the Ancestors, and then vainly refuse to accept the genuine Transmission from this Ancestral Master, such a person's attitude would be hard to condone. It must be due to a lack of trust as a result of befuddled and foolish thinking. Such a person is one who discards what is true in order to pursue some fabrication, one who forsakes the Source in a desire for trifles. This may well take the form of a belittling contempt for the Tathagata.

Folks who would give rise to Supreme Wisdom should always accept the Transmission passed on to them by an Ancestral Master. Not only have we encountered the Buddha Dharma, which is so hard to come by, but also, as the Dharma descendants of the genuine Transmission of the Buddha kesa, we have the opportunity to experience It directly, to explore and learn from It, to accept It, and to keep to It. This, accordingly, is our encountering the Tathagata; it is our hearing the Buddha give voice to the Dharma; it is our letting the Buddha's radiance shine forth; it is our experiencing what the Buddha experienced; it is our directly Transmitting Buddha Mind; it is our reaching the very Marrow of Buddha; it is our putting on the kesa of Shakyamuni Buddha, which is before our very eyes, and it is Shakyamuni Buddha right before our very eyes, entrusting the kesa to us. Through our devoutly following the Buddha, we have humbly accepted the kesa.

❀

The Methods for Washing the Kesa

Put the unfolded kesa into a clean washtub and leave it to soak for about four hours in boiling hot water that has been incensed. Another method is to immerse it in clean boiling water and wait until the water has cooled down. Nowadays, we customarily use hot ash-water. Here in Japan, ash-water refers to hot water containing lye. When the ash-water has cooled down, rinse the kesa in clean, fresh, hot water several times, but do not scrub it with your hands or tread on it with your feet. Continue in this manner until the dirt and grease have been removed. Then, rinse it in cold water in which some incense, such as aloes or sandalwood, has been mixed. After that, hang it on a clean clothes pole to dry. After it has completely

11. A reference to scholars who are unrelenting in their involvement with making distinctions over terms and their meanings.

dried, fold it, put it on a high place, burn incense and strew flowers,[12] circumambulate it to the right several times, and respectfully bow to it. Make three, six, or nine full bows, hands in gasshō,* then kneel with hands in gasshō and, holding the kesa in both hands, recite the kesa verse. After this, stand up and respectfully put the kesa on in the usual manner.

❀

The World-honored One, in advising His great assembly, said:

> In the ancient past when I was in the presence of Ratnagarbha Buddha—the Buddha Who is the Storehouse of the Treasure—I was the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion. At that time, as the Bodhisattva-Mahasattva* of Great Compassion, I made the following vow before Ratnagarbha Buddha, saying, "World-honored One, when I have finally become a Buddha, there may be sentient beings who have entered into My Teaching and, leaving home to become monks, have donned a kesa. They may include monks or laity, male or female, who show a lack of faith by breaching grave Precepts, putting false views into practice, or acting contemptuously towards the Triple Treasure, thereby accumulating for themselves all sorts of heavy defilement. But if they give rise to a feeling of respect for even the span of a single thought, so that they regard the large patchwork robe with esteem, or if they give birth to a feeling of respect so that they regard the World-honored One, or the Dharma, or the Sangha with esteem, then, O World-honored One, I declare that, if even one among such sentient beings in any of the Three Courses* is incapable of receiving confirmation of ultimate Buddhahood, and, as a result, that person regresses or completely turns away, then I have deceived and misled all present-day Buddhas within all worlds everywhere for countless, limitless, immeasurable eons, and I will surely fail to realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment.

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12. Whether Dōgen intended the conventional phrase referring to incense and flowers to be taken literally is uncertain. 'Strewing flowers' is sometimes understood to mean 'reading Scriptures'. Burning incense and strewing flowers is also associated with the offering of one's training. For more about the metaphoric meaning of these phrases, see "Bodhidharma's Discourse on Pure Meditation" in *Buddhist Writings on Meditation and Daily Practice,* (Shasta Abbey Press, 1994), pp. 369-71.

"World-honored One, after I have become a Buddha, should any being—be it a dragon or a demon, human or non-human—be able to don this kesa, revere and make offerings to it, reverence and praise it, then should that being be able to catch sight of the smallest bit of this kesa, he or she will be able to keep from regressing from within the Three Courses.[13]

"If there are sentient beings pressed by hunger and thirst—be they spirits who are violent because of their dire poverty, or persons of humblest birth, or beings who act like hungry ghosts*—should they acquire a bit of a kesa, even four inches square, then they will be able to have their fill of what they thirst and hunger for and will be able to realize fully what they have prayed ever so long for.

"When there are sentient beings who are acting with each other in offensive ways, stirring up malicious and hostile thoughts and intentions, and keeping things roiling until a fight breaks out—whether any of those engaged in such fighting be dragons, fierce spirits, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kinnaras, mahoragas, kumbandhas, or pishachas, human or non-human[14]—should any of them call this kesa to mind, then, due to the influence of the kesa, they will give rise to a heart that is compassionate, a heart that is soft and flexible, a heart that is free of malice and hostility, a heart that is tranquil and devoid of defiling passions, a virtuous heart that is well-tamed and subdued, and thereby be able to return to a state of immaculacy.

"Should there be someone who is in the midst of an armed conflict, a civil litigation, or a criminal prosecution, and should this person, whilst holding onto a fragment of this kesa, go among those involved and, for self-protection, make offerings to it, show reverence for it, and venerate it, this person and others like him will lose the inclination to injure others through aggression, to coerce them, or to

13. That is, after having reverently accepted a kesa and put it on, some may become so accustomed to wearing it that they forget that they have it on, but should they then catch sight of even a bit of it, this will remind them of why they donned the kesa in the first place, which will enable them to keep from regressing in their training and practice.

14. 'Dragons…pishachas' comprise a list of quasi-mythical beings who were originally given to violent or seductive acts but who, upon conversion to Buddhism, became spiritual guardians, each type having governance over some protective function. Hence, they may manifest as some human or non-human being fulfilling that function.

treat them with ridicule and scorn. Constantly being able to surpass others in this regard, such a person will come through all such difficulties as these.

"World-honored One, if my kesa were unable to fulfill the saintly merits of such acts as these aforementioned five, then I have deceived and misled all present-day Buddhas within all worlds everywhere for countless, limitless, immeasurable eons, and will surely fail to realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment in the future and to do the work of a Buddha. Moreover, having strayed from the virtuous Dharma, I would certainly be incapable of exposing and destroying whatever leads others off the Path."

O my good disciples, the Tathagata Ratnagarbha then extended His golden-hued right arm and, rubbing the crown of the head of this Bodhisattva of Great Compassion, said warmly, "Well put, well put, my splendid disciple! What you have said is a great, precious treasure that is both wise and virtuous. You will ultimately realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. This kesa garment will be able to fulfill these five saintly merits and create great benefits."

O my virtuous disciples, as the Bodhisattva-Mahasattva of Great Compassion, having heard the Buddha's praise, I felt a joy arising in My heart that made it dance beyond measure. It then happened that the Buddha extended His golden-hued arm, its hand with its long, webbed fingers as soft and supple as a heavenly robe. Once He had rubbed My Bodhisattva head, My Bodhisattva body was immediately transformed, resembling the figure of a young man of twenty.

O my good disciples, the great crowd in that assembly, all the various creatures, such as the dragons, the celestial beings, the gandharvas, both the human and the non-human, put their hands in gasshō as an offering, bestowing many kinds of blossoms on Me as the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion, and they danced and made music, offering this as well. After they had praised Me in these various ways, they dwelt in silence.

From the time that the Tathagata was in the world up to this very day, whenever bodhisattvas and monks search through the Scriptures and monastic regulations for the merits of the kesa, without fail, they take these five merits to be the principal ones.

Truly, the kesa is the Buddha robe for all Buddhas in the three temporal worlds of past, present, and future. Though we say that its spiritual merits are beyond measure, to attain the kesa amidst the Teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha must surpass the attaining of a kesa amidst the Teaching of any other Buddha. Should you ask why, well, long ago when Shakyamuni Buddha, as the Bodhisattva-Mahasattva of Great Compassion, was in a state conducive to His realizing Buddhahood, He made five hundred great vows in the presence of Ratnagarbha Buddha, in particular taking solemn vows like the five just mentioned on the spiritual merits of the kesa. These merits, moreover, must surely be limitless and beyond the mind's ability to grasp. Consequently, what we call 'the genuine Transmission down to today of the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of the World-honored One' is the kesa robe. The Ancestral Masters who genuinely Transmitted the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching have invariably made a proper Transmission of the kesa. Sentient beings who have kept to this robe when it was passed on to them and who have humbly placed it atop the crown of their head as an act of respect have invariably realized the Way within two or three lifetimes. Even if someone were to put one on as a joke or for some personal profit, this act will be a cause for his or her realizing the Way.

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Our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna once said:

> If people who have left home to be within the Buddha Dharma break the Precepts and lapse into impure ways, once they have brought their impure ways to an end and obtained liberation from them, they will be like the female monk Utpalavarna ('She Who Has the Hue of a Lotus Blossom') in the Jataka Scripture on past lives. While the Buddha was in the world, this female monk attained the Six Transcendent Abilities[15] and realized arhathood.* She once entered the house of a member of the nobility, and, continually extolling the Dharma of leaving home to become a monk, she admonished the wives and daughters of the noble, saying, "My sisters, you should leave home and become monks."
>
> The noblewomen all replied, "We are young and our bodies are comely. For us to keep to the Precepts would indeed be hard, and we would surely break them on occasion."

15. Dōgen will explain what these are later in this discourse.

The monk replied, "If you break the Precepts, then you break them. Just leave lay life behind!"

They then asked her, "If we break the Precepts, then we shall certainly fall into some hellish state, so why would you have us break them?"

She replied, "If you fall into some hell, then you fall into some hell."

All the women broke out in laughter and said, "In a hell we will receive the consequences of our defiling deeds, so why would you have us fall into such a state?"

The monk replied, "In recalling my own past lives, there was a time when I had become a prostitute. I dressed up in all sorts of clothes and told the age-old licentious stories. One day, I dressed up as a female monk, just as a joke. As a direct result of this I became a female monk in Kashō Buddha's time. After a while, I took to depending on my aristocratic demeanor and gave rise to pride and arrogance, thereby breaking monastic prohibitions as well as Precepts. Because of the defilement from breaking monastic prohibitions and Precepts, I fell into a hellish state where I suffered the consequences of my various defiling acts. After I had suffered these consequences, I met Shakyamuni Buddha and left home to become a monk, ultimately obtaining the Six Transcendent Abilities and realizing arhathood. Due to this, I have come to know that if we leave home and take the Precepts, even though we may later break Them, we will realize arhathood because of the karmic effect of the Precepts. If I had merely done bad things without having any effects from the Precepts, I would not have realized the Way."

Nāgārjuna then continued with Utpalavarna's narrative:

"In times long past, I had fallen into hellish states for generation after generation, getting out of some hell only to become a wicked person once again. When that wicked person died, again a hell was entered, and nothing whatsoever had been gained. Now, because of this, I have come to realize that if someone leaves home to be a monk and takes the Precepts, even though that person later breaks the Precepts, because of once having taken Them, that person will obtain the fruits of the Way."

The first cause for this female monk, who had the hue of a lotus blossom, to realize the arhat's way was not something meritorious on her part, but just her having donned a kesa as a joke, and, due to the merits of that, she had now realized the Way. In a second lifetime, she met Kashō Buddha and became a female monk. In a third lifetime, she met Shakyamuni Buddha and became a great arhat, equipped with the Three Insights and the Six Transcendent Abilities. The Three Insights are the awareness of what is really transpiring within us, the awareness of what has brought about the karmic effects from our past lives, and the awareness of whether or not our defiling passions have truly come to an end. The Six Transcendent Abilities are the ability to freely deal with external situations or circumstances as needed, the ability to know what is really on the minds of others, the ability to see what is really transpiring with others, the ability to hear what others are really saying, the ability to grasp what is really causing people to behave the way they do, and the ability to determine whether or not someone has truly brought his or her defiling passions to an end. Truly, when she was just a person who was doing wicked deeds, she would die only to enter a hellish state. Emerging from that hellish state, she would again become someone doing wicked deeds. But when she felt the impact of the Precepts, even though she would fall into some hellish state due to her breaking of the Precepts, nevertheless, They were ultimately the cause of her realizing the Way. Now, anyone who may put on a kesa as a joke will still be able to realize the Way by his or her third go-round. How, then, could anyone who put on a kesa with a pure and trusting heart for the sake of Supreme Wisdom fail to fully realize its spiritual merits, to say nothing of the spiritual merits realized by one who respectfully accepts and keeps to it during his lifetime and humbly raises it atop the crown of his head, for such merits are indeed so vast as to be immeasurable.

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Whoever gives rise to the Mind that seeks the Way will undoubtedly accept and keep to the kesa, humbly raising it atop the crown of his or her head. To have encountered such a fortunate existence and yet fail to sow the seeds of one's Buddhahood, how pitiful that would be! To have received the body of a human being in the Southern Continent of Jambudvipa,* to have met with the Dharma of Shakyamuni Buddha by being born in proximity to an Ancestral Master who is in the direct line of inheritors of the Buddha Dharma, and then, to no profit, to pass up accepting a kesa that has been directly Transmitted from person to person, a kesa that points directly to one's Buddha Nature—could there be anything more pathetic?

❀

Now, as to the genuine Transmission of the kesa, a genuine Transmission from an Ancestral Master is, in and of itself, the genuine inheritance. It is not something that any other teacher can equal. And even the spiritual merits from accepting and keeping to the kesa whilst following a teacher who has not been Transmitted will be exceedingly profound. How much more, then, will merit accrue to us from our accepting and keeping to a kesa that we received from a genuine teacher, one who had legitimately been given a kesa personally by someone in the Transmission line! Certainly, we will then be a child or grandchild of the Tathagata, for we will have had correctly Transmitted to us the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of the Tathagata. In sum, the kesa has come to be legitimately Transmitted by all Buddhas everywhere, at all times, without interruption. It is what all Buddhas, bodhisattvas, shravakas,* and pratyekabuddhas* alike, everywhere and at all times, have come to safeguard and protect.

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In constructing a kesa, take coarse cotton cloth as your base. When you do not have coarse cotton cloth, use a fine cotton cloth. If you have neither coarse nor fine cotton, use raw silk cloth. If you have neither silk nor cotton cloth, then use, say, a wool twill or a thin silk gauze, all of which the Tathagata endorsed. In a country that does not have any variety of silk, cotton, or twill, the Tathagata also permitted leather kesas.

Speaking in general terms, when dyeing a kesa, we should use blue-green, yellow, red, black, or purple. Whichever color we choose, it should be a loaded color.[16] The Tathagata always wore a flesh-colored kesa, for this is the color of the Kesa. The Buddha's kesa that the First Ancestor passed on to succeeding Ancestors was blue-black in color, and its cloth was of Indian cotton. It is now on Mount Sōkei. In India, it was passed on twenty-eight times, and in China, five times. Now, the descendants of the ancient Buddha Daikan Enō have all had Transmitted to them the ancient custom of the Buddha's robe and have kept to it, which is something that is beyond other monks.

Generally speaking, there are three types of kesa. The first is a waste cloth robe, the second a fur robe, and the third a refurbished robe. 'Waste cloth' refers to what was discussed earlier. A fur robe is made from the fur and down of beasts and

16. That is, not a pure, intense, primary color, but one whose brightness has been toned down by mixing some other color in with it.

birds. Should trainees be unable to obtain waste cloth, they may gather this down and make it into a robe. A refurbished robe refers to one whose worn spots and tears have been patched and which is then presented to a trainee. We do not wear worldly finery.

The venerable monk Upali asked the World-honored One, "O World-honored One of Great Virtue, how many panels does a sanghati robe have?"[17]

The Buddha responded, "There are nine types. And what are these nine? They are referred to as nine-paneled, eleven-paneled, thirteen-paneled, fifteen-paneled, seventeen-paneled, nineteen-paneled, twenty-one-paneled, twenty-three-paneled, and twenty-five-paneled robes. The first three of these large monastic robes have two long segments and one short segment in each panel, and we should keep to this style. The panels of the next three types have three long segments and one short segment, whereas the final three have four long segments and one short segment. Any panel that has more segments than these would be one whose tears have been repaired."

Upali once again addressed the World-honored One, saying, "O World-honored One of Great Virtue, how many sizes of sanghati robes are there?"

The Buddha replied, "There are three, namely, large, medium, and small. A large one is three hasta long and five hasta wide.[18] A small one is two and a half hasta long by four and a half hasta wide. Anything between these two is called 'medium.'"

Upali then addressed the World-honored One, saying, "O World-honored One of Great Virtue, how many panels does an uttarasangha robe have?"

The Buddha replied, "It has just seven panels, with each having two long segments and one short segment."

17. These are the large robes Dōgen spoke of earlier. The meaning of the Sanskrit term sanghati, as well as other similar technical names for robes, is explained later in the text.

18. A hasta is an Indian measure of variable length. One hasta is the distance from the intended wearer's elbow to the tip of his or her fist or index finger, generally ranging between sixteen and twenty inches.

> Upali then addressed the World-honored One, saying, "O World-honored One of Great Virtue, how many sizes does this seven-paneled robe have?"
>
> The Buddha replied, "It has three, namely, large, medium, and small. A large one is three by five hasta, and a small one is a half hasta shorter on each side. 'Medium' refers to anything between these two."
>
> Upali then addressed the World-honored One, saying, "O World-honored One of Great Virtue, how many panels does an antarvasa robe have?"
>
> The Buddha replied, "It has five panels, each composed of one long and one short segment."
>
> Upali again addressed the World-honored One, saying, "How many sizes does an antarvasa robe have?"
>
> The Buddha replied, "There are three, namely, large, medium, and small. A large one is three by five hasta, with a medium and a small being the same as before, that is, reduced up to a half hasta on each side."
>
> The Buddha added, "The antarvasa robe has two additional types. And what are these two? The first is two hasta long and five hasta wide. The second is two hasta long and four hasta wide."

The term 'sanghati' translates as 'double-layered robe'. The term 'uttarasangha' translates as 'uppermost robe'. The term 'antarvasa' translates as 'innermost robe', and is also called 'the lower robe'. It is also said that the sanghati robe is called 'the large robe', or 'the robe for entering royal palaces', or 'the robe for giving Teaching'. The uttarasangha robe is referred to as 'the seven-paneled robe', or 'the middle robe', as well as 'the robe for entering amongst the assembly'. The antarvasa robe is called 'the five-paneled robe', or 'the small robe', as well as 'the robe for going about on one's daily paths', and 'the robe for carrying out one's temple duties'.

We should safeguard and protect these three robes. Further, among the sanghati robes there is a sixty-paneled kesa that we also must not fail to accept and hold to.

It is generally held that the measurements of a body depend on the span of a lifetime, ranging from eighty thousand years down to a hundred years. Some say that 'eighty thousand years' and 'one hundred years' are different; others say that they are equal. Between these two views, the one which says that they must be

equal corresponds to the genuine Transmission. The dimensions of a Buddha's Body and that of a human are far distant: a human body can be measured, but ultimately a Buddha's Body is beyond measure. This is why, the moment a Shakyamuni Buddha of the present dons the kesa of Kashō Buddha, it will be something that is neither long nor wide. The moment the Tathagata Maitreya* dons the kesa of a present Shakyamuni Buddha, it will be something that is neither short nor narrow. We must clearly perceive, unequivocally resolve, fully comprehend, and infer in detail the principle of a Buddha's Body being something that is neither tall nor short. Lord Brahma resides high in the world of form, yet he does not see the crown of the Buddha's head. Moggallana may have reached all the way to the distant World Whose Banner Signpost Is the Bright Light, yet he has not thoroughly investigated what the Buddha has voiced. It is truly beyond our minds to imagine or grasp that the form and voice of Buddha are one and the same, whether seen or heard from near or far. All the spiritual merits of the Tathagata are like this, so we should humbly keep these merits in mind.

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When it comes to cutting out and sewing a kesa, there is the separate piece robe, the pleated robe, the gathered robe, and the plain robe.[19] All of these are proper methods of construction. We should accept and keep to those robes that we have.

❀

The Buddha once said, "The kesa of Buddhas in any of the three temporal worlds is invariably backstitched."[20]

❀

In obtaining material for these robes, again, we consider what is immaculate to be best. We consider the robe of waste material to be the most immaculate. All the Buddhas in all the three temporal worlds, without exception, consider this

19. The separate piece robe consists of trimmed pieces of cloth (segments) sewn into vertical panels, which are then joined together and bounded by strips of the base cloth. The pleated robe is made from an uncut piece of base cloth folded in vertical pleats and then sewed to form the appearance of panels. The gathered robe is made from an uncut piece of base cloth folded in vertical pleats, between which panels made of separate segments of cloth are then sewed together. The plain robe is a hemmed piece of uncut cloth.

20. A form of hand sewing in which one first sews one stitch backward on the front side of the fabric, and then sews one stitch forward of double length on the reverse side to form a solid line of stitching on both sides.

material to be immaculate. In addition, a robe given as an alms offering by one with a trusting heart is also immaculate. And one purchased in the marketplace with untainted money is also immaculate. Even though the time within which a robe is to be made has been set by tradition, we are now in the decadent final days of the Teaching, living in a region remote from the original source, so in our accepting and keeping to the kesa, it would probably be best for us to do our cutting and sewing when we have aroused our trusting heart.

The best key to understanding the Greater Course is that the laity—whether commoners or those in lofty positions—also accept and keep to the kesa. Both Lord Brahma and Lord Shakra have now accepted and keep to the kesa, and they are excellent models in the worlds of sensual desire and form. And among humans, the number of excellent examples cannot be calculated. Lay bodhisattvas have all accepted and keep to it.

In China, both Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty and Emperor Yang of the Sui dynasty accepted and kept to the kesa. Both Emperor T'ai-tsung and Emperor Su-tsung of the T'ang dynasty wore the kesa, trained and studied amidst the monastic family, and accepted and kept to the Bodhisattva Precepts.[21] Other folks—such as lay disciples and their wives—who have accepted the kesa and taken the Precepts have been excellent models in both the past and the present.

In Japan, Crown Prince Shōtoku accepted and kept to the kesa, and, whilst giving Dharma talks on various Scriptures, such as the *Lotus Scripture* and the *Scripture on the Lion's Roar of Queen Shrimala*, he experienced the auspicious sign of jeweled flowers raining down from the heavens. After that, the Buddha Dharma spread throughout our country. Although the prince is regarded as the nation's imperial regent, he was, in fact, a spiritual guide and teacher for commoners as well as for those in lofty positions. As an emissary of the Buddha, he was a father and a mother to sentient beings. In our country today, even though the materials, colors, and measurements of kesas have been misunderstood and have become corrupted, that we have even heard the word 'kesa' is due simply to the influence of Crown Prince Shōtoku. How sad it would be today if he had not shattered what was false and set up what is genuine during his time. Later, Emperor

21. At that time in China, it was usual for the laity to take only the first five of the Ten Great Precepts. To take the Bodhisattva Precepts is to take all ten of these Great Precepts, as well as the forty-eight Less Grave Precepts. These Precepts can be found in the *Scripture of Brahma's Net.* One translation of this appears in *Buddhist Writings on Meditation and Daily Practice* (Shasta Abbey Press, 1994), pp. 55-188

Shōmu likewise accepted and kept to the kesa, and he also took the Bodhisattva Precepts as well. Therefore, whether we are of imperial rank, or whether we are ministers or subjects, we should not delay in accepting and keeping to the kesa, as well as in taking the Bodhisattva Precepts. There can be no greater joy and good fortune for any being in human form.

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Someone once said, "The kesa that a lay person accepts and keeps to is called either 'a single-stitched robe' or 'a secular garment'.[22] That is, the backstitch was not yet used in sewing one." It has also been said, "When laity pay a visit to a training hall, they need to bring with them the three Dharma robes, a willow twig toothpick, water for rinsing the mouth, food utensils, and a meditation mat. They should train and practice in precisely the same pure manner as monks do."

Such is the legacy of some ancient worthy. However, what is now passed on directly by the Buddhas and Ancestors is that kesas are all backstitched, whether conferred on rulers, ministers of state, lay disciples, or ordinary folk. A good example of this is the Sixth Chinese Ancestor Enō who had already received the genuine Transmission of the Buddha's kesa while he was still the temple servant known as Lu.

❀

Speaking in general, the kesa is the badge and banner of a Buddhist disciple. If we have completely accepted and are keeping to the kesa, then every day we should humbly raise it above our heads. Then, with it placed upon the crown of our head and with our hands in gasshō, we should recite the following verse:

How great and wondrous is the robe of enlightenment,
Formless and embracing every treasure!
I wish to unfold the Buddha's Teaching
That I may help all sentient beings reach the Other Shore.

After this recitation, we then put on the kesa. While robed in the kesa, we should think of it as our teacher and look upon it as a stupa.* We also recite this verse when we place it on our head after having laundered it.

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22. Single stitching consists of alternating stitches of the same length, one on the front of the fabric and one on the back.

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The Buddha said, "When you shave your head and don the kesa, you receive the protection of all the Buddhas. When any of you leave home behind, both the lofty and the humble will make venerative offerings to sustain you." Be clear in your thinking: once you have shaved your head and put on a kesa, you will be aided and protected by each and every single Buddha. By relying on the help and protection of all these Buddhas, you will be able to experience the spiritual merits of Supreme Wisdom. Both the assemblies of lofty beings and the masses of commoners will make offerings to sustain such a one as you.

❀

The World-honored One, in advising the monk Jnanaprabha ('He Whose Wise Discernment is Radiant'), spoke thus:

> The Dharma robe, based on its material, color, and dimensions, acquires ten superb benefits.
>
> First, because it blankets your body well, it keeps feelings of shame or embarrassment at bay and shields you with a sense of modesty, so that you may train with the good Dharma and put It into practice.
>
> Second, because it keeps off heat and cold, as well as mosquitoes, vicious creatures, and poisonous insects, you can train in the Way with a feeling of peace and tranquility.
>
> Third, it makes manifest the look of one who has left home to be a monk, so that those who see you will feel delight and stay far away from evil thoughts and feelings.
>
> Fourth, the kesa has the appearance of a veritable jeweled banner to persons of both ordinary and lofty positions, and those who honor and esteem it will be able to be reborn in Brahma's heavenly world.
>
> Fifth, when we wear a kesa, it gives rise to thoughts of a precious banner which can extinguish whatever is bedeviling sentient beings and can produce all manner of happiness and virtue.
>
> Sixth, right from the beginning, when we construct a kesa we should dye it with a loaded color, thereby avoiding thoughts of greed engendered by the five senses, and without arousing feelings of covetousness or lust.

Seventh, the kesa is the immaculate robe of the Buddha, which permanently cuts off defiling passions because it transforms them into fertile fields for good.

Eighth, when you put a kesa on your body, it wears away the karma from your defiling acts and, moment by moment, promotes your treading the path of good deeds by keeping to the Ten Precepts.

Ninth, the kesa also resembles a fertile field because it promotes the good and virtuous Bodhisattva Way.

Tenth, the kesa also resembles armor because it is able to protect you from being harmed by the poisonous arrows of defiling passions.

O Jnanaprabha, you surely realize that whenever Buddhas, as well as pratyekabuddhas, shravakas, and immaculate monks, put the kesa upon their body, as a result of the causal effects of these ten benefits, these three holy types alike will sit upon the precious platform of liberation.[23] Wielding the Sword of Wisdom, they will defeat the demons of defiling passion, and these holy types, together as equals, will enter the various realms of nirvana.

The World-honored One, then wishing to express this in verse, said:

O My monk Jnanaprabha, listen well to what I say,
The robe that is so vast a field of blessings has profits ten.
Worldly clothing increases the taint of desire,
But not so the Tathagata's Dharma attire.
The clothes of Dharma hinder well the shame and blush of those with worldly minds,
Filling all with modest thoughts that bring to fruit the fertile fields of happiness.
Cold, and heat, and insect's poisonous sting it keeps at bay,
And firms the heart that seeks the Way, till to the Ultimate you come.
Making clear your leaving home, it parts you from your greeds and lusts,

23. The three holy types are Buddhas, lay trainees, and monks.

And severs you from the false views five, that you may train and practice in the proper way.[24]
The kesa is as a precious flag whose sight inspires respect;
Whoever humbly bows to it will gain Lord Brahma's joyful gifts.
When, as the Buddha's child, you spread your kesa wide, bow as before a stupa you would bow,
For then will such joy arise that all defiling thoughts will disappear, making the hearts of the lofty and the common to be moved.
When you refrain from putting on proud airs and come to deep respect, you are a monk in truth,
And all you do will become free of worldly dust and cares.
All Buddhas praise the kesa as a good and fertile field,
As unsurpassed in profit and delight for sentient beings all.
Wondrous beyond belief are the kesa's powers and strengths;
It helps you to train so that your actions plant the Bodhi seeds.
Their sproutings of the Truth will be as seedlings in the spring,
Their wondrous fulfilling of enlightenment like autumn's fruits.
Truly is the kesa a suit of armor, diamond hard,
Impregnable against the harm from passion's poisoned darts.
So brief have I now praised these profits ten;
Had I all eons to expound them, never could I exhaust what they enfold.
Were a dragon to wrap about his body but a single kesa thread,

24. The five false views are: 1) attachment to self or other, 2) belief in the existence of a self, whether eternal or not, 3) denial of cause and effect, 4) to hold that the preceding three views constitute the Truth, 5) belief that only strict adherence to the Precepts leads to enlightenment.

Then from a lordly garuda's feasting could he escape.
Should some human whilst crossing the open sea but hold this robe,
He need have no fear of woe from monstrous fish or any hungering thing.
Though thunder roar and through an angry sky the lightning flash,
The one who wears a kesa need have no fear.
Should a layman, clothed in white, hold this robe aloft,
All wicked, hungering beings will never dare draw nigh.
Should such a one arouse the will to train and seek to leave domestic life behind
So that, now wearied of all worldly things, he may pursue the Buddha's Way,
All devilish mansions everywhere will tremble and quake,
As this person, arrow swift, comes to truly know the Body of the Dharma Lord.

These ten superb benefits have broadly encompassed all the spiritual merits of the Buddha's Way. It would be good for you to explicitly explore and apply all the merits and virtues described in these sentences and verses. Do not scan them and then hastily put them aside, but look at each and every line and consider its import at length. These superb benefits are simply what the spiritual merits of the kesa are; they are not strengths arising from some trainee's lengthy and fierce pursuit of spiritual benefits.

The Buddha said, "The spiritual strengths of the kesa are beyond all imaginings and conceptions." So, any attempt by ordinary persons, as well as by the wise or saintly, to understand these benefits by conjecture will be in vain. In more general terms, immediately upon our realizing the Body of the Dharma Lord, we will indeed be wearing the Kesa. There has never been anyone from ancient times onwards who realized the Body of the Dharma Lord and was not wrapped in the Kesa.

The most immaculate material for a robe is waste cloth. Its spiritual merits are evident throughout the three divisions of the canon—the Scriptural Discourses, the monastic regulations, and the commentaries—of both the Greater and the Lesser Courses, so we would do well to make inquiries of those who have explored them extensively. We also need to clarify in detail what other materials may be used for making a robe. This is something that Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor

after Ancestor have made abundantly clear and have correctly Transmitted to us, and They are persons unsurpassed by any others.

In the *Middle Āgama Scripture*, the Buddha said:

> O all you discerning ones, let us suppose that there is someone whose physical behavior is unstained, but whose manner of speaking and intentions are tainted. If an astute person should see this, and then feel any hostility arising, this feeling must, by all means, be dispelled. O all you discerning ones, let us further suppose that there is someone whose bodily actions are tainted, but whose speech and intentions are unstained. If an astute person should see this and then feel any hostility arising, this feeling too must, by all means, be dispelled. And just how should such a one dispel this feeling?
>
> O you discerning ones, such a person should be like the hermit monk living in a forest who gathers up pieces of waste cloth. He discards from this waste material whatever part he sees is shabby, or soiled with excrement, or stained with urine, nasal mucus, or any other unclean substance. After he has spotted such a cloth, he picks it up with his left hand and stretches it out with his right. If there are any parts free from stain of excrement, urine, mucus, or any other unclean substance, or any part not riddled with holes, he then tears that part off and takes it.
>
> In like manner, O you discerning ones, if there is someone whose bodily actions are stained while his speech is untainted, do not think about that person's tainted bodily behavior. Simply keep in mind the purity of his speech. If astute people feel hostility arising at what they see, by all means they should dispel it in this manner.

This is the method by which hermit monks of the forest handled waste cloth.

There are four kinds and ten types of waste cloth. When gathering waste cloth, first, take those parts that have no holes. Next, reject those parts too deeply or too long stained by feces or urine so that they cannot be washed clean. You may take those parts that are washable.

The Ten Types of Waste Cloth

First, cloth chewed by an ox.
Second, cloth gnawed by rats.
Third, cloth singed by fire.

Fourth, menstrual cloth.
Fifth, cloth discarded from childbirthing.
Sixth, cloth abandoned at a wayside shrine for birds to peck apart.
Seventh, cloth from a dead person's clothing abandoned at a grave site.
Eighth, cloth from abandoned prayer flags.
Ninth, cloth from robes discarded by officials upon their advancement to higher rank.
Tenth, burial shrouds discarded by those returning from a funeral.

These ten types of cloth are what people discard; they are not something that people in general make further use of. We pick these up and make them into the immaculate material of a kesa. They are what all Buddhas at all times have sung the praises of and have come to make use of. This waste cloth robe is therefore what the ordinary and the lofty, as well as dragons and other such beings, hold in great esteem, protect, and defend. Gather these pieces of cloth and make them into a kesa, for they are indeed the foremost of pure materials: they are the foremost in immaculacy.

In Japan today, such waste cloth robes do not exist. Though you may try to seek them out, you will be unable to come across them. How sad that our country is so small and remote! Instead, we need to use the clean materials that donors have given us as alms-cloth. Or, we may make into kesas some cloth bought in the marketplace by persons whose money comes from an untainted livelihood. Such waste material as this, as well as what has been earned through an untainted livelihood, is, indeed, neither silk nor cotton, neither gold nor silver cloth studded with pearls or jade, nor patterned cloth or silk gauze that is brocaded or embroidered: it is simply waste cloth. This waste material is not for the sake of humble dress, nor for the sake of beautiful raiment: it is simply for the sake of the Buddha Dharma. Using it for clothing is precisely the genuine Transmission of the Skin and Flesh, Bones and Marrow of all Buddhas at all times. It is the genuine Transmission of the Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching. Moreover, we should not ask commoners or lofty ones about the virtues of this, but should learn of them through training with the Buddhas and Ancestors.

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Whilst I was in Sung China doing my training on the long bench in the Meditation Hall, I noticed that every morning following the striking of the wake-up

block, the monks who sat on either side of me would raise their folded kesa in a gesture of offering, place it atop their head, respectfully make gasshō, and recite a verse to themselves. What they were saying in that verse was:

> *How great and wondrous is the robe of enlightenment,*
> *Formless and embracing every treasure!*
> *I wish to unfold the Buddha's Teaching*
> *That I may help all sentient beings reach the Other Shore.*

On the occasion when I learned of this, a feeling I had never experienced before welled up in me. A joy filled my body to overflowing; tears of gratitude, stealing from my eyes, rolled down my cheeks and wet the collar of my robe. The reason for this was that I had been reading the *Āgama Scriptures* shortly before, and though I had seen the passage on humbly offering up the kesa above one's head, I was not clear about the ceremonial procedure. Now I was personally witnessing it and was filled with such joy and worshipful admiration at being able to see manifest before me its deeper intent. When I was in my native land, there had been no teacher to instruct me in this, nor any good spiritual companion. How could I not regret the days and years I had so vainly spent or not grieve their passing? But upon seeing and hearing what was now before me, I was able to rejoice because of some good deed done in a past life. If I had vacantly remained in my homeland, how could I possibly have sat shoulder-to-shoulder with these Treasures of the Sangha who had received and actually donned the kesa of a Buddha! My joy and sorrow were not unmixed, as my myriad tears issued forth.

Then, in silence, I took a vow: no matter how, be I ever so incompetent, I will become an inheritor of the Buddha Dharma, I will correctly Transmit the True Teaching, and, out of pity for the sentient beings in my homeland, I will help them see and hear the Teaching concerning the robe that the Buddhas and Ancestors have genuinely Transmitted. The vow that I took then has now proved not to be in vain. The lay and monastic bodhisattvas who have accepted and keep to the kesa are many, for which I rejoice. These companions who have accepted and keep to the kesa, without fail, humbly raise their kesa above their head each morning and evening, since the spiritual merits of this will be unsurpassed. The practice of reading or listening to a single line from Scripture or the whole of this kesa verse was prevalent everywhere throughout all the highways and byways of China, and was as common as trees and stones. And even if the spiritual merits from the genuine Transmission of the kesa were encountered for only a scant day and night, they would still be pre-eminent and unsurpassed.

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In Great Sung China during the tenth lunar month of the seventeenth year of the Chia-ting era (November 1223), two Korean monks came to Ch'ing-yüen Prefecture. One was called in Chinese Chi-hsüen, and the other was called Ching-yün. These two incessantly talked about the meaning of Buddhist Scriptures, for they were scholarly men of letters, and, though they were also monks, they had neither kesa nor alms bowl and resembled those who wander through life in ignorance. Sad to say, they had the superficial form of monks but lacked the Dharma of monks. This may have been due simply to their being from a small, remote nation. When those from Japan who have the superficial form of monks travel to other countries, they too resemble those like Chi-hsüen.

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Shakyamuni Buddha, before His enlightenment, humbly raised the kesa above His head, never ignoring it for some twelve years. You are already His distant descendants, so train well with this practice. Turn away from bowing to celestial beings, spirits, rulers or their ministers, since all such acts are done in the vain pursuit of fame and gain. Instead, offer them the spiritual merit from your humbly raising the Buddha's kesa above your head, for that will be joy indeed!

Given to the assembly at Kannondōri in Kōshōhōrin-ji Temple on the first day of winter in the first year of the Ninji era (October 17, 1240).

85

On Giving Rise to the Enlightened Mind

(Hotsu Bodai Shin)

Translator's Introduction: This discourse was given on the same day as was Discourse 67: On Giving Rise to the Unsurpassed Mind *(Hotsu Mujō Shin)*. Because of the nature of its content, it may have been intended primarily for monastics.

Generally speaking, there are three types of mind. "The first is the mind of *chitta*, which we call the discriminative mind. The second is the mind of *hridaya*, which we call the mind of grass and trees. The third is the mind of *vriddha*, which we call the True Mind." Among these, we invariably employ the discriminative mind to arouse *bodhichitta*, the enlightened Mind. *Bodhi* is an Indian word which we call the Way, or what is True. *Chitta* is an Indian word which we call the discriminative mind. Without this discriminative mind we could not give rise to the enlightened Mind. I am not saying that this discriminative mind is the enlightened Mind; rather, we give rise to the enlightened Mind by means of the discriminative mind.

Giving rise to the enlightened Mind not only means vowing to take all sentient beings across to the Other Shore before one has taken oneself across, but it also means actively engaging in the task. Though somebody may be considered lowly, when such a one gives rise to this Mind, that person is already a spiritual guide and teacher for all sentient beings.

This Mind is neither something innate nor something that suddenly rises up as new at this moment, nor is It something singular or something plural, nor is It something spontaneous or something planned, nor is It something within our physical body, nor is our body something within that Mind. This Mind is not something that has permeated the entire universe of thoughts and things, nor is It something of the past or something of the future, nor is It something that is present or something that is absent, nor is It something intrinsic or something produced by an external cause, nor is It something of a combined nature or something of a causeless nature. Even so, at that point when we have established a spiritual connection with a Master, we give rise to the Mind that aspires for enlightenment.

It is not something that the Buddhas and bodhisattvas* confer upon us, nor is It something that we can do for ourselves. This Mind arises due to Its being established through a spiritual connection with our Master and, consequently, It is not something spontaneous.

Giving rise to the enlightened Mind occurs, by and large, in human beings in the southern continent of Jambudvipa.* Only on rare occasions does this event occur among those in the eight states where it is difficult to hear of Buddhism.[1] After giving rise to the enlightenment-seeking Mind, one does the training and practice for three asamkhyeya eons or for a hundred great eons.[2] In some cases, people train for immeasurable eons and then become a Buddha. In other cases, people train for immeasurable eons to help sentient beings reach the Other Shore, ultimately not becoming a Buddha but just continuing to help ferry sentient beings across, doing this solely for the benefit of sentient beings. They are pursuing the course that is the delight of bodhisattvas.

To speak more broadly, the Mind of enlightenment operates via the three modes of behavior—body, speech, and mind—without a moment's idleness, always helping sentient beings give rise to the Mind of enlightenment and leading them along the Buddha's Way. To waste one's time bestowing worldly pleasures on people does not benefit sentient beings. Giving rise to this Mind and giving rise to this training for the enlightenment of others go far beyond the outer bounds of delusion versus enlightenment. Having transcended the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form, such persons have become preeminent among all beings, and have gone quite beyond shravakas* and pratyekabuddhas.*

The bodhisattva Makakashō, wishing to pay homage to Shakyamuni Buddha, composed the following eulogy:

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* See *Glossary.*

1. The eight states where it is difficult to encounter a Buddha or hear His Teaching are: 1) being born in one of the hells; 2) being born as a hungry ghost; 3) being born as an animal; 4) being born in the Northern Continent of Uttarakuru where all is pleasant; 5) being born in one of the heavens where life is long and easy; 6) being deaf, dumb, and blind; 7) being an erudite scholar; 8) being born in the intermediate period between a Buddha and His successor.

2. These time measurements may seem to be of inordinately long duration, but they are simply of indeterminate length: it takes just as long as it takes.

Awakening one's intention and arriving at the Ultimate,
though two, are not separate.
Of these two states of mind, the former is the more
difficult to arrive at,
So when those who have not yet arrived at the Ultimate
first lead others to arrive,
I, for that reason, bow to their first giving rise to their
intention.

With Your first arising, You were already a Teacher for
humans and gods,
Surpassing those who merely listen and those who seek
the Goal only for themselves.
The arising of such an intention as Yours has surpassed
the triple world,
And therefore we call it the supreme state above all.

The arising of the intention means giving rise, right off, to the intention to help others reach the Other Shore, even though you yourself have not yet reached that Place. We call this giving rise to the enlightened Mind for the first time. Once you have given rise to this Mind, you will then encounter Buddhas to whom you should make alms offerings, and you should hearken to Their Teaching. Further, should you then strive to give rise to the enlightened Mind, it would be like adding frost atop snow.[3]

The term 'the Ultimate' refers to the Wisdom that is the result of Buddhahood. Were we to compare the state of supreme, fully perfected enlightenment with the state of giving rise to the enlightened Mind for the first time, it is like comparing the universal, all-consuming conflagration of the final age with the light of a firefly. Even so, when you give rise to the heart that helps others reach the Other Shore, even though you yourself have not yet reached that Place, there is no difference between the two. As the Tathagata said in the *Lotus Scripture*,

I constantly make this My intention:
How may I help living beings
Enter the Unsurpassed Way
And quickly realize Buddhahood?

3. That is, having once given rise to the enlightened Mind there is no need to strive after It as if it had not yet arisen.

This is what is meant by the immeasurable life of the Tathagata. Giving rise to the intention, doing the training and practice, and awakening to the fruits of Buddhahood are the same for all Buddhas.

'To benefit all sentient beings' means helping sentient beings give rise to the heart that helps others reach the Other Shore even though they themselves have not yet reached that Place. Even though you yourself have not yet reached that Place, you should not reckon that you will become a Buddha simply on the basis of your ability to help others reach the Other Shore. Even if the ripening of your meritorious activities, which could turn you into a Buddha, were at its full, still you should offer this merit to sentient beings in order to help them realize Buddhahood and recognize the Truth.

This Mind is not ours, or someone else's, or something that comes to us, yet after this intention arises, whenever we raise aloft the Great Earth, everything turns into gold, and whenever we sprinkle the waters of the Great Ocean, they immediately turn into the sweet dew. After that, whenever we lay hold of soil or rocks, sand or pebbles, we make use of this enlightened Mind, and whenever we explore the gushing forth of water and the blazing up of fire, we are personally shouldering the enlightened Mind. Hence, to offer as alms one's nation and city, one's spouse and children, the seven treasures,* men and women, one's head and eyes, one's marrow and brains, one's body and flesh, or one's hands and feet, all are the hustle and bustle of an enlightened Mind; all are an enlightened Mind's playfulness, which is like a fish frolicking in a pool of water.

Chitta, our mind that is engaged in discriminating at this very moment, is neither close to us nor distant from us; it is neither ourselves nor someone else. Even so, if we use this mind to turn ourselves towards the principle of helping others awaken before we ourselves are fully awakened, without retreating or turning away from it, this is our giving rise to enlightened Mind. Thus, if we employ enlightened Mind in making an alms offering of grass and trees, tiles and stones, gold and silver, and rare treasures, which all sentient beings hold onto as if these things were their own possessions, how could this not be our giving rise to enlightened Mind?

Because Mind, as well as all thoughts and things, is beyond self and other, beyond both together, or beyond being without a cause, if we should give rise to this enlightened Mind, even for a split second, all the myriad thoughts and things will become Its additional effects.

Generally speaking, the arising of Mind and the realizing of Truth rely upon the instantaneous arising and vanishing of all things. If things did not arise and vanish instantaneously, previous moments of evil actions would not yet have passed. And if previous moments of evil action had not yet passed, later moments

of good actions could not arise now. Only a Tathagata alone clearly knows the measure of this moment. The Teaching that our mind in any single moment can give rise to a single utterance and that an utterance in any single moment can express a single word is also true, but it is true only of a Tathagata alone; this is not something that those of the other two Courses are capable of. As a rule, there are sixty-five moments within the time it takes for someone to snap his fingers, during which the five skandhas*—that is, the five components of existence—arise and vanish, but ordinary, unawakened people have not noticed or recognized this though they may have sensed it. Based on the length of a tatkshana, which is comprised of a hundred twenty moments, in the passing of a single day and night there are sixty-four hundred million, ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred and eighty moments during each of which the five skandhas arise and vanish. Even so, ordinary, unawakened people have not taken notice of this, and because they have not taken notice of it, they have not given rise to the enlightened Mind. Those who do not know the Buddha Dharma or who do not trust the Buddha Dharma do not believe in the principle of the arising and vanishing of moments.

Anyone who has clarified what the Tathagata's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana, is certainly believes in this principle of the arising and vanishing of moments. Now that we have encountered the Tathagata's giving expression to it in the Scriptures, we may seem to be experiencing it as if it had fully dawned on us, but if we are barely aware of it during the span of a tatkshana, we can only take on faith that this principle must be so. If we fail to clarify and understand through direct experience all of the Dharma that was expressed by the World-honored One, it will be as if we do not know what the length of a moment is. As trainees, do not be reckless and act proud or arrogant. Not only are we ignorant of the smallest of things but we are also ignorant of the largest. Should ordinary sentient beings rely on the power of the Tathagata's Truth, they too will see the whole of the three-thousandfold worlds that comprise the universe. In sum, as we pass from fully existing to intermediately existing, and from intermediately existing to fully existing again, everything moves on, moment by moment.[4] Thus, whatever our intentions, we are led by our deliberate actions, so that the cycle of birth and death rolls on without stopping even for a single moment. With our body and mind rolling on like this through the cycle of birth and death, we should immediately give rise to the enlightened intention of helping others reach the Other Shore, even though we ourselves have not yet reached that

4. 'Intermediately existing' describes the period between one moment of existing and the next moment of existing.

Place. As we simply give rise to enlightened Mind, even if we regret having a body and mind, they are what arises, ages, sickens, and dies, and ultimately they are not our possession.

Oh, how unceasingly and swiftly sentient beings go through life from arising to vanishing!

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> While the World-honored One was in the world, there was a monk who came to call on Him. The monk bowed, his head respectfully touching the Buddha's feet. He then arose and, out of deference, stood to the side and, addressing the World-honored One, said, "At what speed does the course of a living being's life—from its arising to its departing—go?"
>
> The Buddha replied, "Although I could tell you, you would not understand."
>
> The monk then asked, "Is there some example that could illustrate it?"
>
> The Buddha said, "There is. And I shall tell it to you now, for your benefit. Consider, for example, four fine archers. Each takes up his bow and arrow, then the four, standing together back to back, prepare to shoot in the direction each is facing. Now, there is a nimble man who comes along and says to them, 'Now, if you will all shoot off your arrows at the same time, I will be able to catch them all before any of them touch the ground.' What do you think? Would such a one be nimble or not?"
>
> The monk said to the Buddha, "He would be exceedingly swift, O World-honored One."
>
> The Buddha then said, "The swiftness of that man is not as fast as that of an earth-dwelling yaksha.[5] And the swiftness of an earth-dwelling yaksha is not as fast as that of a sky-dwelling yaksha. And the swiftness of a sky-dwelling yaksha is not as fast as the swiftness of the Four Celestial Lords. And the swiftness of those Celestial Lords is not as fast as the swiftness of the two orbs of sun and moon. And the swiftness of the two orbs of sun and moon is not as fast as the swiftness of the resolute celestial children. It is they who pull the

5. A yaksha is a belligerent demon that enjoys stirring things up. After its conversion, it becomes a guardian of Buddhism.

> chariot whose wheels are the orbs of sun and moon. These celestial beings are swift at rolling things. The course of a living being's life—from its arising to its departing—passes swifter still. It rolls on in every moment, without the slightest pause."

The swiftness with which the cycle of arising and vanishing rolls on in every moment during the course of our life is like this. You who are doing the practice instant by instant, pray, do not forget this principle. While you are experiencing this swiftness with which the cycle of arising and vanishing rolls on in every moment during the course of your life, if you give rise to a single thought of helping others arrive before you yourself have done so, the Life that is eternal will manifest before your very eyes. All the Buddhas in the ten quarters during the three periods of time, along with the Seven Buddhas,* the twenty-eight Ancestors in India and the first six Ancestors in China, as well as all the other Ancestral Masters who have Transmitted the Buddha's Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching have maintained and relied on this enlightened Mind. Those who have not yet given rise to this enlightened Mind are not our Ancestral Masters.

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Question 120 in the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple* states, "Have you awakened to enlightened Mind?" You clearly need to realize that what this is saying is that, in learning the Truth of the Buddhas and Ancestors, awakening to enlightened Mind is unquestionably foremost. This is the continual Teaching of the Buddhas and Ancestors. 'To awaken' means to have something fully dawn on you. This does not refer to the great, ultimate awakening of a Buddha. Even if someone has entirely experienced all ten stages of bodhisattvahood, that person is still a bodhisattva. The twenty-eight Ancestors in India and the first six Ancestors in China, as well as the other great Ancestral Masters, were bodhisattvas; they were not the Buddha, nor were they shravakas or pratyekabuddhas, or anything else. Among those who are exploring the Matter* in the world today, there is not even one who has clearly understood that the Ancestors are bodhisattvas, not shravakas. Such folks today carelessly describe themselves as patch-robed monks or patch-robed disciples. Since they do not yet understand this, they have recklessly created confusion. How sad that, in these degenerate days of ours, the words and ways of the Ancestors have died out.

Thus it is that even though there are those who remain in home life and those who have left home life behind, and even though there are those who are in lofty positions and those who are just ordinary folk, and even though there are those who say that they are suffering and those who say that they are happy, all should

quickly give rise to the intention of helping others awaken before they themselves have fully awakened. Even though the world of sentient beings has its limits and is also beyond limits, we give rise, first off, to the intention of helping all sentient beings awaken, for this is what the enlightened Mind is.

When bodhisattvas who are but one stage away from realizing Buddhahood are about to descend to Jambudvipa, they offer the following as their final Teaching for the sake of those celestial beings in the Tushita Heaven: "The enlightened Mind is the bright gateway to Truth, for It does not separate Itself from the Three Treasures." You need to clearly understand what they are saying, namely, that not separating oneself from the Three Treasures is what comes after the arising of the enlightened Mind. After we have given rise to the enlightened Mind, we must not regress or wander off from It, but must steadfastly protect and defend It.

❀

> The Buddha once said, "How do bodhisattvas protect the One Great Matter, which is enlightened Mind? The bodhisattvas and mahasattvas* are always diligent in protecting enlightened Mind, which is like ordinary, conventional parents in the world protecting their child, or like a one-eyed person protecting his one remaining eye, or like someone protecting his guide when going through a wilderness. A bodhisattva's protecting enlightened Mind is just like this. Because bodhisattvas rely on safeguarding enlightened Mind in this way, they realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. Because they rely on realizing supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, they come equipped with certainty, bright-mindedness, self-worth, and freedom from defilement, which describes the unsurpassed great nirvana. For this reason, bodhisattvas protect this one Teaching."

Such are the Buddha's words concerning the safeguarding of enlightened Mind. The reason why we protect It and do not let ourselves regress or wander off from It is, as popular custom would put it, because It is like the three things that are born but do not reach maturity, namely, fish eggs, mangos, and bodhisattvas who have given rise to the intention.[6] Because, generally speaking, there are many who have regressed and thereby have forgotten enlightened Mind, I too once feared that I would regress and forget It. This is why I have protected enlightened Mind.

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6. Many fish eggs are produced but few succeed in hatching. Mango trees produce many flowers, but few become mature fruit. Dōgen will explain the third.

When bodhisattvas are beginners, many regress or wander off because they do not have a genuine Master. If they do not have a genuine Master, they do not hear the true Teaching, and if they do not hear the true Teaching, they are apt to deny causality, along with denying the end of suffering, the Three Treasures, and all thoughts and things in the three temporal worlds. Vainly craving the five fleeting desires of property, sexual involvement, food and drink, fame, and sleep in the present, they forget the merits of enlightenment in the future. Sometimes, in order to obstruct a trainee, bedevilers and tempters will take on the form of a Buddha or appear in the figure of one's parents or of one's Master, as well as of one's relatives or even of heavenly beings. Then, drawing near, they make up ever-worsening stories, saying, "The Buddha's Way is far, far off. You will soon enough experience many sufferings and deep sorrows. Better to free yourself from birth-and-death first and then help others awaken." The trainee, hearing these tales, regresses from enlightened Mind and backs away from the conduct of bodhisattvas. Further, you need to know that preachings like these are nothing but the mouthings of demons. O my bodhisattvas, know this and do not follow such teaching. Even more, you should not regress or wander away from your vow to practice helping others to awaken before awakening yourself.

Should you consider going against your vow to help others to awaken before you do, you must realize that this is the preaching of demons, the preaching of non-Buddhists, the preaching of wicked companions. So do not follow it.

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> There are four kinds of demons: first, the demons of disturbing passions; second, the demons of the five components of existence; third, the demons of death; and fourth, the celestial demons of desire.[7]
>
> 'The demons of disturbing passions' refers to the hundred and eight disturbing passions.[8] When these are analyzed in detail, they actually comprise eighty-four thousand hindering passions.
>
> 'The demons of the five components of existence' are the various ways in which whatever arises unites with some hindering

7. 'Demons' are not necessarily something in human form, but whatever bedevils the trainee by creating a feeling of being hindered in one's practice.

   The first sentence of this quotation by Dōgen is from the *Great Scripture on the Buddha's Parinirvana*. The remainder is from a commentary on this sentence by our Indian Ancestor Nāgārjuna.

8. These are the mental functions that disturb and pollute our mind and body.

passion. For instance, we have a body. The four basic elements of this body—earth, wind, water, and fire—along with whatever else is fashioned from these four elements,* such as what we see with our eyes, comprise what we call 'the component of physical form'. Whatever we perceive through our senses that unites with the hundred and eight disturbing passions, we call 'the component of perception'. Whatever distinctions our mind makes up—be they measurable or immeasurable—which unite with judgments, we give the name of 'the component of mentation, or of thought'. When, by giving rise to thoughts of pleasure or disgust, we then give rise to a disposition to be greedy or angry, we call this activity—be it proper or improper—'the component of conduct'. By uniting the six sense organs—eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind—with the six objects of the senses—color and shape, sound, odor, taste, touch, and thoughts—we give rise to the six kinds of mental functioning—seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, and discerning; we call the immeasurable, boundless mind which unites with the judgments formed by these six kinds of mental functioning 'the component of consciousness'.

Because causes and conditions are impermanent, what we call 'the demon of death' interrupts the flow of the five components of existence, and because this completely removes the three elements of consciousness, heat, and life, we call it 'the demon of death'.

'The celestial demons' are the lords of the world of desire. Because they are deeply attached to worldly pleasures and engage in ulterior motives to gain them, they give rise to fallacious views. They despise and envy the words and ways taught by all the sage and saintly ones for realizing nirvana, which is why we call them 'the celestial demons'. In India, Māra is their name; in China, they are called those who can steal someone's very life. Although such demons of death can truly rob you of your life, other celestial demons can also produce the causes and conditions for your life being stolen, and they can also rob one of a life of wise discernment. Because of this, they are called 'killers'.

Someone once asked me, "The one category of the demons of the five components of existence embraces the other three types, so why do you separate them into four?" I replied, "Truly, there is but one demon, but in order to clarify what that one means, there are the four."

The preceding is what our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna taught. You trainees should remember it and diligently study it. Do not regress or turn away from enlightened Mind, vainly concealing demons of fascination.

Delivered to the assembly at Kippō-ji Temple in Echizen Province on the fourteenth day of the second lunar month in the second year of the Kangen era (March 24, 1244).

Copied in the Master's hermitage on the ninth day of the fourth month in the seventh year of the Kenchō era (May 16, 1249).

Ejō

86

On Making Venerative Offerings to Buddhas

(Kuyō Shobutsu)

Translator's Introduction: The key term in this discourse is *kuyō*, translated in the title as 'making venerative offerings', and shortened in the text itself to 'making offerings' or some variation thereof. It refers not only to selflessly giving alms and expressing gratitude to the Buddhas but also to showing respect for the sacred objects associated with Them, such as the memorial monuments called stupas, which also serve as reliquaries for sacred relics. What is important is the attitude of mind behind the offering, and, when it is free of any tinge of self, the merit that returns to the giver thereby is, as Dōgen says, beyond measure.

The original text, which is still in draft stage, is one of twelve that Dōgen had not been able to complete before his death. It contains many excerpts, particularly from writings attributed to Nāgārjuna.

The Buddha once said the following in verse:

If there were no past ages,
There could not have been Buddhas in the past.
If there were no Buddhas in the past,
There could be no leaving home to accept the full Precepts.

Clearly you need to keep in mind that Buddhas invariably exist in the three temporal worlds. When it comes to the Buddhas of the past, do not assert that They had a beginning, and do not assert that They had no beginning. If you erroneously impose upon Them Their having or not having a beginning and an end, this is not something that you have learned from the Buddha's Teaching. Those who make offerings to Buddhas invariably become Buddhas, just as do those who leave home life behind and faithfully follow their Master. They become Buddhas due to the merit of their making offerings to Buddha. How could people who have never made alms offerings to even one Buddha ever become Buddhas themselves, since they lack a cause for becoming a Buddha?

In the *Scriptural Collection of the Past Deeds of the Buddha*, it says the following:

> The Buddha once told Moggallana, "I recall from My past having planted good roots in places where there were immeasurable,

unbounded World-honored Ones and having ultimately sought supreme, fully perfected enlightenment.

"O Moggallana, I recall from My past having taken on the body of a saintly Wheel-turning Lord* and having encountered thirty billion Buddhas, all sharing the same name of Shakya. I, the Tathagata, along with My assembly of disciples, out of our esteem for Them, sustained Them by respectfully making offerings to Them of the four necessities: namely, shelter, clothing, food, and medicine. At that time, those Buddhas did not foretell My future by saying, 'You will realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment and become one who understands the ways of the world, who is a teacher for ordinary people as well as those in lofty positions, and who is the World-honored One, for at some future time You will indeed be able to realize True Wisdom.'

"O Moggallana, I recall from My past having taken on the body of a saintly Wheel-turning Lord and having encountered eight billion Buddhas, all sharing the same name of Dipankara, the One Who Sets the Lamplight Ablaze. I, the Tathagata, along with My assembly of disciples, out of our esteem for Them, sustained Them by respectfully making offerings to Them of the four necessities: namely, shelter, clothing, food, and medicine, along with banners and canopies, flowers and incense. At that time those Buddhas did not foretell My future, saying, 'You will realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment and become one who understands the ways of the world, who is a teacher for ordinary people as well as those in lofty positions, and who is the World-honored One.'

"O Moggallana, I recall from My past having taken on the body of a saintly Wheel-turning Lord and having encountered three billion Buddhas, all sharing the same name of the One Who Nourishes. I, the Tathagata, along with My assembly of disciples, made offerings to Them, completely supplying Them with the four necessities. At that time, those Buddhas did not foretell My future, saying, 'You will certainly become a Buddha.'"

In addition, He made offerings to countless other Buddhas. While in the body of a saintly Wheel-turning Lord, He surely would have ruled over the four continents

and his supplies for making offerings to Buddhas must truly have been abundant.[1] If He was a great, saintly Wheel-turning Lord, He would have been lord over a three-thousandfold world. His offerings to Buddhas at that time were beyond the estimation of ordinary people today. Even if the Buddha were to explain it to them, it would be difficult for them to comprehend.

In the eighth chapter, "Pure View", of the *Scripture That Is the Buddha's Treasure House*, it says the following:

> The Buddha once told Shariputra, "I recall from My past, when I was chasing after supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, I encountered thirty billion Buddhas, all sharing the same name of Shakyamuni. I then became a saintly Wheel-turning Lord and, for the purpose of seeking after supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, I made offerings of shelter, clothing, food, and medicine to all of Them and to Their disciples. Even so, those Buddhas did not foretell My future, saying, 'You will certainly realize Buddhahood in some future lifetime.' And why was that? Because My giving had an ulterior motive.[2]
>
> "O Shariputra, I recall from My past that I was able to encounter eight thousand Buddhas, all of whom were called One of Constant Radiance. I then became a saintly Wheel-turning Lord and, for the purpose of seeking after supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, I made offerings of shelter, clothing, food, and medicine to all of Them and to Their disciples. Even so, those Buddhas did not foretell My future, saying, 'You will certainly realize Buddhahood in some future lifetime.' And why was that? Because My giving had an ulterior motive.
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> "O Shariputra, I recall from My past that I encountered sixty thousand Buddhas all of whom were called One Who Is the Brightness of the Light. I then became a saintly Wheel-turning Lord and, for the purpose of seeking after supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, I made offerings of shelter, clothing, food, and medicine to all of Them and to Their disciples. Even so, those

1. The four continents refer to the four regions that lay around the spiritual Mount Sumeru.

2. Namely, seeking to 'get' supreme enlightenment, as if it were something to be purchased by doing virtuous deeds. Also, there is no mention in the quotations in this discourse that He sought enlightenment for the sake of helping others to realize the Truth.

Buddhas did not foretell My future, saying, 'You will certainly realize Buddhahood in some future lifetime.' And why was that? Because my giving had an ulterior motive.

"O Shariputra, I recall from My past My encountering three billion Buddhas, all of whom were called One who Nourishes. I then became a saintly Wheel-turning Lord and made offerings of the four necessities to all of Them, but none foretold My future because My giving alms had an ulterior motive.

"O Shariputra, I recall from My past a time when I succeeded in encountering eighteen thousand Buddhas, all of whom were called One Who Is a Lord of the Mountain and whose eon was called the Upper Eight. Within this assembly of eighteen thousand Buddhas, all of us shaved our head, donned a kesa,* and studied the practice of supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, but none foretold My future Buddhahood because of My having an ulterior motive.

"O Shariputra, I recall from My past My being able to meet five hundred Buddhas, all of whom were called One Who Is Atop the Lotus Blossom. I then became a saintly Wheel-turning Lord and made alms offerings to all of Them and to Their disciples, but none foretold My future Buddhahood because I had an ulterior motive.

"O Shariputra, I recall from My past having had the opportunity to meet five hundred Buddhas, all of whom were called One Whose Virtue Is Majestic. Although I gave alms to one and all, none forecast My becoming a Buddha because of My having an ulterior motive.

"O Shariputra, I recall from My past My being able to meet two thousand Buddhas, all of whom were called Kaundinya. I then became a saintly Wheel-turning Lord for the sake of Them all, giving alms to one and all, but none foretold My becoming a Buddha because of My having an ulterior motive.

"O Shariputra, I recall from My past My encountering nine thousand Buddhas, all of whom were called Kashō. I supplied Their assembly of Buddhas and disciples with alms in the form of the four necessities, but none predicted My future Buddhahood because of My offering having an ulterior motive.

"O Shariputra, I recall from My past that there was a period of ten thousand eons, during which no Buddha emerged. At that time, there were ninety thousand pratyekabuddhas* during the first five hundred eons. Throughout the whole of My lifetimes, I made alms offerings of clothes, food, bedding, and medicine to all of Them,

without exception, while showing My respect by praising Them. During the next five hundred eons, I again made alms offerings of the four necessities to all of Them, without exception, while showing My respect by praising Them.

"O Shariputra, when these thousands of eons had completely passed, there were no more pratyekabuddhas. I then died in Jambudvipa* and was reborn in the Brahma Heaven, becoming its great Lord Brahma.[3] Tossing about like this for five hundred eons, I was then born again in the Brahma Heaven, being reborn as its great Lord Brahma rather than being reborn in Jambudvipa. When these five hundred eons had completely passed, I was reborn down in Jambudvipa, over which I governed. When My life came to an end, I was reborn in the celestial world of the Celestial Guardian Rulers of the Four Quarters. When My life came to an end there, I was reborn as Lord Indra in the Trayastrimsha Heaven with the name Shakrendra.[4] Rolling on in this manner, I was reborn in Jambudvipa after completing five hundred eons and then reborn in the Brahma Heaven for five hundred eons, becoming its great Lord Brahma.

"O Shariputra, for nine thousand eons only once was I reborn in Jambudvipa, and for another nine thousand eons I was reborn only in celestial worlds. At the time of the conflagration that ends an eon, I was reborn in the celestial world called Luminous Sound. When the world was completely recreated, I was again reborn in the Brahma Heaven. For nine thousand eons I was not reborn within the world of humans.

"O Shariputra, during these nine thousand eons, there were no Buddhas or pratyekabuddhas. Human beings who fell into evil ways were many indeed!

"O Shariputra, when these ten thousand eons had come to an end, there was a Buddha who emerged in the world called the Tathagata Who Guards the Universe, the Arhat,* the One Who Is Fully Enlightened, the One Possessed of Wise Discernment Who Travels the Way, the One Who Has Attained Emancipation, the One Who Knows the Ways of the World, the Unsurpassed One, the Trainer of Ordinary

3. The Brahma Heaven is the lowest of the four meditation heavens in the world of form. Its inhabitants are said to be without sexual desire.

4. The Trayastrimsha Heaven is the second of the six heavens in the world of desire.

People and Those in Lofty Positions, the Awakened World-honored One. At that time, when My life came to an end in that Brahma Heaven, I was reborn in Jambudvipa, where I became a great saintly Wheel-turning Lord by the name of the Lord of the Celestial Community and had a life span of ninety thousand years by human reckoning. I spent the whole of that lifetime making all manner of pleasant offerings to the Buddha and ninety thousand of His monks, while remaining intent upon chasing after supreme, fully perfected enlightenment during these ninety thousand years. The Buddha Who Guards the Universe also did not predict My future Buddhahood. And why? Because at that time I was not able to thoroughly penetrate what the True Nature of all thoughts and things is, and therefore indulged in the viewpoint of having a personal self with its ulterior motive.

"O Shariputra, during this eon, there were a hundred Buddhas who had left home life behind, each having a different name. At that time, I became a saintly Wheel-turning Lord for each of Them and spent My entire life making alms offerings to Them, along with Their disciples, with the intent of pursuing supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. However, because of My having an ulterior motive, those Buddhas likewise did not foretell My realizing Buddhahood.

"O Shariputra, I recall from My past My having been able to encounter a thousand Buddhas during seven hundred eons of indeterminate length, all of whom were called One Who Is as the Golden Sands of the River Jambu. During the whole of that life, I made offerings to Them of the four necessities, and still none foretold My realizing Buddhahood because of My having an ulterior motive.

"O Shariputra, I recall from My past My having been able to encounter six hundred twenty myriad Buddhas during those great seven hundred eons of indeterminate length, all of whom were called One Who Sees the True Form of All Things. At that time, I became a saintly Wheel-turning Lord and throughout My life made all manner of pleasant alms offerings both to Them and to Their disciples, but again, none foretold My future Buddhahood because I had an ulterior motive.

"O Shariputra, I recall from My past My having been able to encounter eighty-four Buddhas during those great seven hundred eons of indeterminate length, all of whom were called One of Imperial Form. At that time, I became a saintly Wheel-turning Lord and throughout My life made all manner of pleasant alms offerings both to

> Them and to Their disciples, but none foretold My future Buddhahood because I had an ulterior motive.
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> "O Shariputra, I recall from My past My having been able to encounter fifteen Buddhas during those great seven hundred eons of indeterminate length, all of whom were called One Who Is as Radiant as the Sun. At that time, I became a saintly Wheel-turning Lord and through my life made all manner of pleasant alms offerings both to Them and to Their disciples, but none foretold My future Buddhahood because I had an ulterior motive.
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> "O Shariputra I recall from My past My having been able to encounter sixty-two Buddhas during those great seven hundred eons of indeterminate length, all of whom were called One Whose Tranquility Is Spiritually Good. At that time, I became a saintly Wheel-turning Lord and throughout my life made all manner of pleasant alms offerings both to Them and to Their disciples, but none foretold My future Buddhahood, because I had an ulterior motive.
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> "I tossed about like this until I met Dipankara, the Buddha Whose Radiance Is Constant, whereupon I was immediately able to realize the non-arising of all thoughts and things. Because of this, Dipankara Buddha foretold My future Buddhahood, saying 'In the future, after the present eon has passed, You will be able to realize Buddhahood, and You will be called Shakyamuni the Tathagata, the Arhat, the One Who Is Fully Enlightened, the One Possessed of Wise Discernment Who Travels the Way, the One Who Has Attained Emancipation, the One Who Knows the Ways of the World, the Unsurpassed One, the Trainer of Beings High and Low, the Awakened World-honored One.'"

From His initial encounter with thirty billion Shakyamuni Buddhas up to His meeting the Tathagata Dipankara, He constantly served as a saintly Wheel-turning Lord, spending His whole life offering Them alms. Wheel-turning Lords may well live for more than eighty thousand years. His was an alms offering of all manner of pleasant things during each lifetime of some eighty or ninety thousand years. The one He called Dipankara, the Buddha Whose Radiance Is Constant, is the one we know as Dipankara, the Buddha Who Sets the Lamplight Ablaze. In both Scriptures, the Buddha-to-be encountered thirty billion Shakyamuni Buddhas. What is voiced in the passages from the *Scriptural Collection of the Past Deeds of the Buddha* and from the *Scripture That Is the Buddha's Treasure House* is essentially the same.

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During His first immeasurable eon, Shakya Bodhisattva* encountered seventy-five thousand Buddhas whom He served and to whom He gave venerative offerings. The first was called Shakyamuni, and the last was one called Ratnashikhin, the One Whose Topknot Contains the Jewel. In His second immeasurable eon, He encountered seventy-six thousand Buddhas whom He served and to whom He gave venerative offerings. The first one was Ratnashikhin, the One Whose Topknot Contains the Jewel, and the last was one called Dipankara, the One Who Sets the Lamplight Ablaze. In His third immeasurable eon, He encountered seventy-seven thousand Buddhas whom He served and to whom He gave venerative offerings. The first one was Dipankara, the One Who Sets the Lamplight Ablaze, and the last was one called Bibashi, He Whose Reflections Are Excellent.[5] During the ninety-one eons while He was exploring the deeds done in the past for which He was receiving karmic* effects, He encountered the Six Buddhas, whom He served and to whom He gave venerative offerings. The first of the six was Bibashi Buddha and the last was one called Kashō Buddha.

Generally speaking, in making offerings to Buddhas during the three great eons of indeterminate length, He did not begrudge Them anything, beginning with His very life and including such things as His kingdom and cities, His wife and children, His seven royal treasures, and His male and female servants.[6] This is something that goes beyond the ken of ordinary people. Sometimes He made Them offerings of golden millet piled high in silver bowls. At other times He made Them offerings of the Seven Treasures* piled high in gold and silver bowls. And sometimes He made offerings of sweet beans, or of flowers taken from the water and the land, or of sandalwood, aloes, and other types of incense. And sometimes He made offerings to Dipankara Buddha of five-stemmed blue lotus flowers bought at the price of five hundred gold pieces. He even made an offering to Dipankara Buddha of His deerskin kesa.

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5. Bibashi Buddha is the first of the Seven Buddhas, of whom Shakyamuni Buddha is the seventh.

6. The seven royal treasures are the Golden Wheel, wise elephants, swift horses, the divine Pearl, able ministers, women as precious as jewels, and loyal generals.

When it comes to offerings for Buddhas, as a rule you need not make offerings of what you think must surely be important to Them, just hasten to make your offerings while you are still alive, without letting any time—day or night—pass by in vain. Of what value is gold or silver to a Buddha? Of what value are incense and flowers to a Buddha? Even so, Their accepting what is offered is due to Their great wisdom and great compassion in helping us human beings to increase our merit.

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In the twenty-second fascicle of the *Great Scripture on the Buddha's Parinirvana*, it says the following:

> The Buddha once said, "O My good disciples, I recall that immeasurable, unbounded eons ago, when the world at that time was said to be corrupt, there was a World-honored Buddha who was called the Tathagata, the Arhat, the One Who Is Fully Enlightened, the One Possessed of Wise Discernment Who Travels the Way, the One Who Has Attained Emancipation, the One Who Knows the Ways of the World, the Unsurpassed One, the Trainer of Beings High and Low, the Awakened World-honored One. For the sake of His assembly, He was going to give voice to a great Teaching on His passing, a Teaching like this present one. At that time, I turned away from where My friends were in order to hear what that Enlightened One was about to say to His assembly concerning His Great Passing. Having heard of this topic, My heart was filled with joy and I desired to supply Him with an alms offering, but I was so poor that I had no possessions to give Him. Although I wanted to offer My own body for sale, unfortunately it did not sell, so I decided to return home. On My way back home, I met a man on the road, and I asked him, 'I am desirous of offering my body for sale. Could you not buy it?' The man replied, 'The task that I have at my home is beyond what anyone could endure. But if you were able to do it, I would indeed buy it.' Accordingly, I asked him, 'What task is it that no one could endure to do?' The man, seeing My interest, replied, 'I have a dreadful illness, for which a good physician has prescribed that I must take two or three servings of human flesh a day. If you, good sir, could supply me with two or three servings of your flesh daily, I would by all means provide you with five gold coins.' When I had heard this, a joy arose in My heart. I then told him, 'If you will supply me with the coins and allow me seven days to wind up my affairs, I will return to you.' The man responded, 'Seven

days won't do. If you will do as I have asked, I can allow you one day.'

"O my good disciples, I then took those coins and returned to where the Buddha was and bowed before Him, My forehead touching His feet. I then took all that I had received and gave it to Him as an alms offering. After that, I listened to His Teaching with an earnest heart. But at the time I was dull-witted, so even though I heard His Teaching, I was only able to retain the following stanza:

The Tathagata awoke to what nirvana is
And cut Himself free from birth and death forever.
If you listen to this with a sincere heart,
You will ever know joy beyond measure.

"Having taken this verse in, I forthwith returned to the sick man's house.

"O My good disciples, after My return I gave the man two or three pieces of My flesh daily, but because of the karmic effect of My reciting that verse, I experienced no pain. Day after day, without ceasing, I completed a whole month.

"O My good disciples, due to the karmic effect of this, the man recovered from his illness and My body also returned to normal, leaving no wounds or scars behind. At that time, seeing the merit that My body had been so fully supplied with, I gave rise to the intention to seek supreme, fully perfected enlightenment, for if the strength of one of His verses was like this, how much more so were I to fully accept, preserve, and recite His whole Scripture! Seeing that this Scripture had such profit as this only strengthened My resolve, and I vowed that if I were able to realize Buddhahood at a future time, I would take the name of Shakyamuni.

"O My good disciples, because of the strength from the karmic effects of this one verse, I have given voice to the whole Scripture today for the sake of ordinary people as well as those in lofty positions within this great assembly.

"O My good disciples, because of these karmic effects you should know that this *Great Scripture on the Buddha's Parinirvana* is wondrous beyond comprehension, creating immeasurable, boundless merit. Accordingly, this Scripture is the Treasure House of Fully Awakened Tathagatas, of That which is the Profoundly Mysterious."

The bodhisattva who would sell his own body at that time was a cause from the past for the arising of our present-day Shakyamuni Buddha. When we search through other Scriptures, we learn that at the very beginning of the first eon of indeterminate length, there was a time when He made venerative offerings to a previous Shakyamuni Buddha. At that time, He was a tiler who went by the name of He Who Is a Great Radiance. When He gave alms to the previous Shakyamuni Buddha, along with His disciples, He made three kinds of offerings: namely, meditation cushions, sweetened water, and candles. At that time, He made a vow that His nationality, name, life, and disciples would be one and the same with those of this previous Shakyamuni Buddha.

The vow that He made has already been fulfilled today. Thus, when you consider making an offering to the Buddha, do not say that your body is insufficient or that your home is devoid of any value. This account of someone selling his own body in order to make an offering to the Buddhas is genuine Teaching by our present-day Great Master, the Venerable Shakyamuni. Who would not take delight in it? In this story, the Buddha describes someone who would cut off three pieces of his own bodily flesh day after day. Even if that person had been the sick man's good spiritual friend, it is not something that any friend could bear to do. Even so, aided by his profound desire to give alms to a Buddha, he performed the good deeds just described. We are now able to hear the True Teaching of the Tathagata because He was able to dispense with His fleshly body in ancient times. The four lines of the present stanza are beyond anything that can be bought with five gold coins. During your three immeasurable great hundred eons, do not forget your receiving and discarding of lives. Truly, there will be merit that will boggle the mind in your awakening to the Radiance, just as all the Buddhas have done. The disciples who inherit the Dharma should, in all humility, receive It upon the crown of their head and recite It from memory. The Tathagata has already stated that the power of a single verse can be like this, so immensely profound It is.

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In the "Expedient Means" chapter of the *Lotus Scripture*, there is the following verse:

If people at stupas and shrines,
And before bejeweled statues and their painted forms
Make offerings of flowers and incense, banners and canopies,
And all with a reverent heart,

Or have others make music
By beating drums, blowing horns and conches,
Playing panpipes and flutes, lutes and lyres,
As well as harps and cymbals and gongs,
And make all such wondrous sounds as these
To be their offering,
Or if, with a heart filled with joy,
They sing the praises of the Buddha's merit,
Though it be but a single small sound,
All will realize the Buddha's Way.
Even if people with a scattered mind
Should make an offering to His painted form,
Though it be but a single flower's bloom,
They will, at length, meet Buddhas beyond count.
Or if they bow in deepest respect,
*Or simply make gasshō**
Though it be with the raising of a single hand
Or a slight nod of the head,
And thereby make their offering to a pictured Saintly One,
They too, at length, will meet Buddhas beyond count.
And, personally realizing the Supreme Way,
They will help countless beings reach the Other Shore.

This is the very Countenance of the Buddhas in the three temporal worlds. It is Their very Eye, so you should strive with all diligence to meet those of wise discernment and emulate them. Do not let time vainly pass by. As Great Master Sekitō Kisen once said, "Do not waste time." Spiritually beneficial actions like these produce Buddhahood in every case and will do so in the past, present, and future. There cannot be two ways, or three ways.[7] Realizing the fruits of Buddhahood is due to one's making offerings to Buddhas.

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Our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna once said the following in verse:

In our seeking the fruits of Buddhahood,
To extol a single verse,

7. That is, there is only one way to realize Buddhahood in any time period.

To recite a single 'Homage',
To burn a single pinch of incense,
To offer a single flower,
Even such small deeds as these,
Without fail, will enable us to realize Buddhahood.

Even though this is what our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna Bodhisattva put forth for himself, nevertheless we should dedicate our life to it. And what is more, it is something that our Great Master Shakyamuni Buddha expressed, and which our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna expressed and accurately Transmitted. What can be more wonderful than our being so fortunate as to obtain something so precious, as we now climb the Treasured Mountain of the Buddha's Way and enter the Treasured Ocean of the Buddha's Way?[8] Surely it must be due to the power from our making offerings to the Buddha over vast eons. You must not doubt that you will inevitably realize Buddhahood, for it is a foregone conclusion. It is precisely what the Buddha gave voice to.

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> Furthermore, there are instances when a small cause produces great fruit and a small karmic condition produces great recompense. In our pursuit of the Buddha's Way, if we extol a single verse, recite 'Homage to the Buddha' one time, or burn a single pinch of incense, without fail, we will be able to realize Buddhahood. And what is more, if, upon hearing the Teaching, we really know the True Form of all thoughts and things, which is beyond birth and beyond death, beyond non-arising and beyond non-perishing, then we will not likely lose sight of whatever karmic causes or conditions we are involved with.

It is clear from this passage that what the World-honored One voiced was authentically Transmitted to our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna. His golden words, which are faithful to the Truth, are endowed with what he had inherited through the genuine Transmission. Even though they are indeed what our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna voiced, they should not be judged by comparing them with what other Masters have taught. What can be a greater source of joy than our being able to encounter the genuine Transmission that has spread abroad what the World-

8. 'The Treasured Mountain' is an allusion to Mount Sumeru, which is associated with doing our training. 'The Treasured Ocean' is an allusion to the merit realized through doing that training.

honored One was pointing us to? So, do not compare these saintly Teachings with the arbitrary and meaningless preachings of ordinary teachers in China.

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Our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna once said, "Furthermore, it follows that, because Buddhas revere the Dharma, They make a venerative offering to the Teaching and take the Dharma as Their Master. And why is this? Because all Buddhas in the three temporal worlds make the True Form of all thoughts and things Their Master."

Someone then asked, "Why do They not make offerings to the Teaching that is within Their own being, but only make offerings to the Teaching in others?"

Nāgārjuna replied, "To make such offerings would be to follow worldly ways. If monks are desirous of showing veneration to the Treasure of Teaching, they do not make such an offering to the Teaching within their own being, but make it to others who are preserving the Teaching, who know the Teaching, who understand the Teaching. Buddhas are no different. Even though They have the Teaching within Their own being, still, They make venerative offerings to the Teaching in other Buddhas."

The person then asked, "Granted that monks, like Buddhas, are not seeking for good fortune or virtue, so why do they make venerative offerings?"

Nāgārjuna replied, "The Buddha had been cultivating all manner of meritorious deeds over immeasurably long eons, always doing what was good. Even so, He did not seek any manner of recompense. He made His venerative offerings out of His reverence for meritorious deeds.

"For instance, when the Buddha was alive, there was a blind monk who, nevertheless, was able to sew. One day, his needle came unthreaded. Thereupon, he asked, 'Is there someone who so longs for the merit from performing good deeds that he would thread this needle for me?' At that very moment, the Buddha had just arrived where the monk was and said to him, 'I am one who longs for the merit from performing good deeds, so I will come and thread your needle.' This monk, upon recognizing the Buddha's voice, immediately stood up, put on his kesa, and then prostrated himself before the Buddha's feet, saying, 'O Buddha, You are already filled to the brim with merit , so

> why do You say that You long for more?' The Buddha responded, 'Though I may already be filled with merit, I profoundly recognize My debt of gratitude for that merit, the effects and recompense from good deeds done in the past, and the power of meritorious actions. My having attained preeminence among all sentient beings is due to the merit from performing good deeds, which is why I long for it.' The Buddha, having finished His praise of meritorious actions, then gave an impromptu Dharma Teaching for the monk's sake. Having attained the Pure Eye, this monk's fleshly eyes were also made clear."

I heard this story a long time ago during an evening talk in my late Master's quarters. Later, I was able to check up on it, comparing it against the passage in the *Commentary on the Heart Scripture*. The instructive retelling by my late Master who had Transmitted the Dharma to me was clear, without anything left out. This passage is in the tenth fascicle of the *Commentary on the Heart Scripture*. It was clear from this that all Buddhas, without exception, take the True Form of all thoughts and things to be Their great Teacher. The Venerable Shakyamuni Buddha had also given witness to the eternal Truth of all Buddhas.

Taking the True Form of all thoughts and things to be one's great Teacher means making offerings out of deep respect for the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. For immeasurable, indeterminately long eons, Buddhas have amassed meritorious deeds and good spiritual roots without seeking any recompense, but simply making offerings out of reverence for meritorious actions. Having arrived at the state of wise discernment, which is the fruition of Buddhahood, They are fond of doing small virtuous acts, such as threading a needle for a blind monk. If you desire to clarify what the meritorious actions are of someone who brought Buddhahood to fruition, the present story is certainly a precise account of it.

Therefore, meritorious actions that are based on both the wise discernment that is a fruit of Buddhahood and on the underlying principle of what the True Form of all thoughts and things is, are not something akin to what ordinary, everyday people in the world today would fancy them to be. What ordinary people think today is that the True Form of all thoughts and things refers to the manufacturing of evil, and that the wise discernment which is the fruition of Buddhahood simply means having an ulterior motive. False views like these, even though they are known to have existed for eighty thousand eons, have never been

free of the eternalist view of past eons or of the nihilistic view of future eons.[9] So how could they possibly fully realize that the True Form of all thoughts and things is something that each and every Buddha has penetrated through and through? The reason for this is that each Buddha and every Buddha has thoroughly explored the True Form of all thoughts and things.

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Generally speaking, there are ten types of venerative offerings:[10]

First, making a venerative offering to the Buddha's Person;

Second, making a venerative offering to the shrine attached to His stupa;[11]

Third, making a venerative offering to a stupa, a shrine, or whatever else represents the body of that Buddha;

Fourth, making a venerative offering to that Buddha where there is no such representation;

Fifth, making a venerative offering by oneself;

Sixth, urging others to make venerative offerings;

Seventh, making a venerative offering of goods and money to the Buddhas or to Their shrines;

Eighth, making a venerative offering with a devout mind;

Ninth, making a venerative offering with a non-attached mind;

And tenth, making a venerative offering of one's devotion to Buddhist practice.

Among these, Number 1, making a venerative offering to the Buddha's Person, is explained in the commentary as: "Providing an alms offering to the physical body of a Buddha is called making a venerative offering to the physical body of a Buddha."

Number 2, making a venerative offering to the repository of a Buddha, is called making a venerative offering to the shrine attached to His stupa. It says in

9. The eternalist view is that there is something that continues through time as an unchanging, unchangeable essence. The nihilistic view is that there is a self which comes to an end at the time of death.

10. Quoted by Dōgen from the *Writings on the Teachings of Mahayana (Daijōgi-shō)*.

11. Stupa is a Sanskrit term for a pagoda-shaped structure, which customarily contains the funeral ashes of someone who is regarded as a Buddha. The shrine, or in Sanskrit *caitya*, is a ceremonial chapel which is attached to a stupa and which customarily does not contain relics.

the *Code of Behavior for the Members of the Greater Sangha,* "That which houses relics we call a stupa, and that which contains no relics we call a shrine." Some say that both are called a *caitya*. Also, what is called a stupa in Indic languages is also called a pagoda. Also, what is translated here as 'shrine' is called a *caitya* in Sanskrit, which in the *Āgama Scriptures* was pronounced 'shicha'. But it seems to make no difference whether we call it a stupa or a shrine. Even so, as the great Tendai Meditation Master Nangaku Eshi said in his commentary, *My Humble Explanation of the Meditative State That Is a Blossoming of the Dharma*: "Wholeheartedly do we respectfully bow to the relics of the Buddhas throughout the whole universe and to Their venerable portraits, to Their caityas and to Their stupas, to Them as Tathagatas of many treasures, and to the treasured stupa that is the whole body that They have discarded." Clearly, stupas and shrines, as well as relics and portraits, seem to be separate things.

The following account comes from the thirty-third fascicle of the *Code of Behavior for the Members of the Greater Sangha,* entitled "The Teaching Regarding Stupas":

> Once when the Buddha was wandering about while sojourning in the country of Koshala, He came upon a Brahman who was tilling the soil. Upon seeing the World-honored One passing by, he stuck his ox-goading staff into the ground as a prop and respectfully bowed to the Buddha. The World-honored One, having seen this, broke out in a smile.
>
> His monks said to Him, "We'd really like to hear what has caused You to smile."
>
> Thereupon, He told His monks, "This Brahman has just paid homage to two World-honored Ones."
>
> The monks then asked, "Which two Buddhas do you mean?"
>
> The Buddha then told the monks, "Under that very staff which he used when bowing to Me, there is the stupa of Kashō Buddha."
>
> The monks then said to the Buddha, "We pray that You will let us see the stupa of Kashō Buddha."
>
> The Buddha then told the monks, "You must defer to this Brahman and ask him for this plot of land, along with its clod of earth."

The monks thereupon sought this from the Brahman. The Brahman forthwith offered it to them. The World-honored One then made the seven-jeweled stupa of Kashō Buddha appear. Its height was one yojana,* and the width of its face was half a yojana. When the Brahman saw this, he immediately said to the Buddha, "World-honored One, my family name is Kashō, and this is the stupa of our Kashō."

At that time when the World-honored One was fashioning the stupa for Kashō Buddha at that place, the monks asked the Buddha if the World-honored One would permit them to contribute the earth that they had received from the Brahman, to which the Buddha replied that they could. He thereupon gave voice to the following poem:

A hundred thousand loads of purest gold
Are not the equal of a single lump of soil
Used, with devoted mind,
To fashion a Buddha's stupa.

The World-honored One then personally erected Kashō Buddha's stupa. From its square base, which was bordered on all four sides with a railing, there arose two circular terraces, with ornamental tusk-like structures coming out from the base at its four corners. From the top, there arose a tall pole adorned with banners and ringed with parasols. The Buddha said, "This is how a stupa should be constructed." Once the setting up of the stupa was finished, the World-honored One Himself made prostrations to it out of respect for the past Buddha.

The monks then asked the Buddha. "World-honored One, may we too make prostrations to Him?"

The Buddha responded, "You may." He then composed the following poem:

Even hundreds of thousands of gold coins
Brought here as people's offering of alms
Do not equal the respect of someone of good heart
Bowing before a Buddha's stupa.

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* See *Glossary.*

At that time, the local people, having heard of the World-honored One's constructing a stupa, brought incense and flowers as offerings to the World-honored One. Because the World-honored One had paid respect to a Buddha of the past, He forthwith accepted the flowers and incense and offered them to the stupa.

The monks then asked the Buddha, "May we too make offerings?" The Buddha replied, "You may." He then composed the following poem:

Even a hundred thousand carts filled with pure gold
Brought here as an alms offering
Do not equal an offering of flowers and incense
By one of good heart.

A great assembly then gathered like clouds. The Buddha then instructed Shariputra, "You should give voice to the Dharma for the sake of these people." Afterwards, the Buddha composed the following poem:

Even an alms offering of pure gold
Enough to fill a hundred thousand Jambudvipas
Does not equal one offering of Dharma
That persuades others to pursue the practice and training.

At that time, there were those sitting in the assembly who had realized the Way. The Buddha then composed the following poem for them:

Even an offering of pure gold
Enough to fill a hundred thousand worldly realms
Does not equal one offering of Dharma
That leads others to see the Truth.

At that time, a Brahman of unshakable faith set forth before the stupa a food offering for the Buddha and His monks. Then King Prasenajit,[12] hearing of the World-honored One's constructing a stupa for Kashō Buddha, ordered seven hundred carts to be loaded with tiles, then coming to where the Buddha was, he bowed, touching his forehead to the Buddha's feet. He then asked the Buddha, "World-

12. The king of Koshala, who was a lay disciple of the Buddha.

honored One, I would like to enlarge this stupa. May I do so?" The Buddha replied, "You may."

The Buddha then told the great king, "In a past age, at the time of Kashō Buddha's passing away, there was a ruler named He of Good Fortune. He was desirous of constructing for Him a stupa made of the Seven Treasures, when one of his ministers said to the king, 'At some future time, there will be those who are opposed to the Dharma who will appear and will destroy this stupa, acquiring heavy wrongdoing. O Great King, I beg of you that you will simply construct it of tiles, which will then be covered in gold and silver. Even if the gold and silver are taken away, the stupa will still be as it was at first'. Thereupon, in accord with what the minister had said, the stupa was built of tiles, which were then covered over with a thin layer of gold foil. Its height was one yojana high and its front face was half a yojana wide. The railing was made of copper. It took seven years, seven months, and seven days to complete."

King Prasenajit then told the Buddha, "That king had an abundance of merit along with rare treasures. I too will now build a stupa, though I am not that king's equal." When seven months and seven days had passed, the stupa was completed. Upon its completion the king made offerings to the Buddha and His monastic community.

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The Method for Constructing a Stupa

The base is foursquare, with a railing around the perimeter. Two circular terraces rise up from the base, and four tusk-like structures emerge from its four corners. A tall spire adorned with banners and ringed with parasols arises from the top. If any say, "Even though the World-honored One may have freed Himself from greed, hatred, and delusion, He still has need for a stupa," they are harboring a violation of the Buddhist Precepts and, for ages, the retribution from that will be great indeed. The preceding is called 'the method for constructing a stupa'.

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Matters Concerning Stupas[13]

When building a temple, first off, take a survey of land well-suited for erecting a stupa. The stupa is not to be located in the south or in the west. Rather, it should be located in the east or the north. Do not let the place where monks will reside encroach on the Buddha's land, and do not let the place where the Buddhas reside encroach on the place for the monks.[14] If the stupa is close to a burial grove or if dogs were to desecrate this area by bringing in the remains of what they have been eating, by all means, construct a perimeter fence. When you construct monks' quarters, you should locate them in the west or in the south. You should build the stupa atop a high place, and not let water from the monks' land flow onto the Buddha's land, though water from the Buddha's land may be allowed to run onto the monks' land. Within the perimeter of the stupa, you are not to wash or dye your robes, set them out to dry, wear leather shoes, cover your head, or cover your bare shoulder. Nor should you hack and spit on the ground. Were you to say such a thing as, "If the World-honored One has rid Himself of greed, hatred, and delusion, what use does He have for this stupa?" you would be harboring wrongdoing that surpasses what has been spelled out in the monastic Precepts, and the karmic consequences will be heavy indeed! These things are what we call 'matters concerning stupas'.

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Stupa Alcoves

At a time when King Prasenajit paid a visit to the Buddha, he bowed down, respectfully touching his forehead on the Buddha's feet, and asked the Buddha, "World-honored One, in making a stupa for Kashō Buddha, may we fashion alcoves?"

The Buddha replied, "You may. In a past generation, after Kashō Buddha had passed on into parinirvana, a ruler named He of

13. In this section, the term 'stupa' is being used as synonymous with 'temple' or 'monastery'.

14. That is, the monks' quarters (in particular, the Meditation Hall) should be kept separate from the Buddha Hall, which is to be reserved for ceremonial.

> Good Fortune raised a stupa for that Buddha. He constructed alcoves on its four faces. On their upper parts he fashioned images of lions and all sorts of painted ornamental patterns. In front of them he constructed railings. The alcoves were places for putting flowers. Inside the alcoves he hung banners and parasols.
>
> "Should people say, 'The World-honored One has already rid Himself of greed, hatred, and delusion, so why does He still take pleasure in glorifying Himself?' they will be harboring wrongdoing that surpasses what has been spelled out in the monastic Precepts, and the karmic consequences of that will be heavy indeed! This is what we call 'methods for stupa alcoves.'"

It is evident that, above and beyond the wisdom from realizing Buddhahood, to erect a stupa for a past Buddha and to respectfully bow and make offerings to it is a customary practice of Buddhas. Although there have been many examples of actions such as these, for the present, I will just cite the preceding. As for the Buddha Dharma, the Sarvastivādin tradition is supreme,[15] and within that tradition, the *Code of Behavior for the Members of the Greater Sangha* is considered the most fundamental. The *Code of Behavior for the Members of the Greater Sangha* was first brought to China by Hōken after he had cleared a path to India through brambles and thorns and had climbed the Divine Vulture Peak. The Dharma that has been Transmitted by our Ancestors from one to another is in accord with the Sarvastivādin tradition.

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Number 3, making a venerative offering to a stupa, a shrine, or whatever else represents the body of a Buddha, means making venerative offerings to something that is actually right before one's eyes, such as a Buddha in the flesh or a shrine.

Number 4, making a venerative offering to a Buddha where there is no such representation, means 'making a venerative offering when there is no Buddha or shrine right before us. That is to say, we make offerings not only to what is right before us but also to what is not right before us, be it a Buddha, a shrine, a stupa, or a tomb. Making offerings to what is right before our eyes earns great merit, and making offerings to what is not right before our eyes earns even greater merit, because the scope is ever so much broader. Those who make venerative offerings

15. The Sarvastivādin tradition, though associated with a scholastic Hinayana viewpoint, nevertheless shares a common viewpoint with the Mahayana Zen tradition: namely, that all thoughts and things have real existence, which thereby affirms the existence of this world.

both to what is right before their eyes and to what is not right before their eyes earn the greatest amount of merit.

Number 5, making a venerative offering by oneself, means using our whole being to make venerative offerings to Buddhas and shrines.

Number 6, urging others to make a venerative offering to a Buddha or a shrine means that even though what someone has to offer is but something quite small, we should help that person not to be shy about offering it. That is, whether such an offering is actually made by oneself or by another, it is all the same. One's own making of the offering earns great merit, helping others learn to make offerings earns twice as much merit, and making offerings together with others earns the greatest merit.

With Number 7, making a venerative offering of goods and money to Buddhas or to Their shrines or stupas or relics, there are three types of offerings. The first is the offering of necessities, such as clothing and food. The second is the offering of venerative goods, such as incense and flowers. The third is the offering of ornamental objects, namely all other kinds of treasures and adornments.

With Number 8, making a venerative offering with a devout mind, there are three types of devotion. With the first, one simply makes various types of offerings. With the second, when we have a pure and trusting heart that has faith in the virtue of Buddha, then the underlying principle is in accord with what is offered. The third is the heart that transfers one's merit to others, which is the making of our offering from within a heart that seeks Buddha.

Number 9, as to making a venerative offering with a non-attached mind, there are two kinds. The first is the mind being untainted, by which we let go of all our mistakes. The second is the things offered being untainted, in which we let go of all the mistakes that we have made through our not conforming to the Dharma.

Number 10 is making a venerative offering that attains the Way. That is to say, what we call making a venerative offering that attains the Way is our doing venerative deeds that comply with the goal. Some call 'attaining the Way' by names like 'making an offering of the Dharma', and some call it 'making an offering of one's actions'. As to these, there are three types: The first treats making an offering that attains the Way as making offerings of material goods. The second treats making an offering that attains the Way as making an offering that complies with what is good. The third treats making an offering that attains the Way as making an offering of one's training and practice.

Making venerative offerings to the Buddha already encompasses these ten types of offerings. Similar categories also apply to the Dharma and the Sangha. That is to say, making venerative offerings to the Dharma is our making offerings to the principles that the Buddha taught, as well as to the methods of practice that

He gave expression to, including the Scriptural texts. And making venerative offerings to the Sangha is our making offerings to saintly assemblies of all Three Courses,* as well as to their temples, along with their iconography and stupas, including monastics who have not yet fully awakened.

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Next, there are six types of minds that make venerative offerings.

The first is the unsurpassed mind that produces good fortune like a field abundant with rice. It is the most excellent good fortune that arises within such an abundant field.

The second is the unsurpassed mind that recognizes the virtue of indebtedness, since all virtuous joys arise from the Three Treasures.

The third is the unsurpassed mind that arises within all sentient beings.

The fourth is the mind that is as hard to encounter as a flowering udumbara tree.

The fifth is the solitary, unique mind that is one with the three-thousand great-thousandfold universe.

The sixth is the mind that is fully equipped with dependable understanding of all realms and what lies beyond such realms.

In short, the Tathagata, who fully comprehends the ways of the world and the ways beyond the worldly, has been able to supply sentient beings with a reliable foundation. This is called ‘being fully equipped with dependable understanding’. If you make venerative offerings to the Three Treasures with these six attitudes of mind, then even if your offerings are small, you will receive immeasurable, boundless merit. How much more so if your offerings were plentiful!

We should make such alms offerings with a sincere heart, for, without fail, it is how Buddhas have been accustomed to making offerings. Stories in Scriptures and monastic regulations about such alms offerings are plain to see, still, the Buddhas and Ancestors have customarily Transmitted this practice personally. Occasions for making venerative offerings abound in the days and months you spend attending on others and carrying out your work duties. The methods for placing images and relics, for making venerative offerings and respectfully bowing, for building stupas, and for constructing shrines have been authentically Transmitted only in the quarters of our Ancestors of the Buddha. If these methods had not descended from our Ancestors of the Buddha, they would not have been authentically Transmitted.

Also, if such methods have not been authentically Transmitted in accord with the Dharma, they will contradict the Dharma. When the ways of making offerings contradict the Dharma, they will not be genuine. When the ways of making offerings are not genuine, the merit therefrom will be negligible. Beyond question, you need to learn the methods for making venerative offerings that are in accord with the Dharma and authentically Transmit them. Meditation Master Reitō spent many years tending to Daikan Enō's stupa. The temple worker Ro spent his days and nights pounding rice as his alms offering for the assembly. Both of these are instances of methods for making venerative offerings that accord with the Dharma.[16] These are but a small sample of such instances, which I do not have the time to quote extensively. You should make your alms offerings in a similar manner to theirs.

On a day during the summer retreat in the seventh year of the Kenchō era (1255).

Copied in the Monks' Hall at Eihei-ji Temple on the twenty-third day of the sixth lunar month in the second year of the Kōan era (August 2, 1279).

16. Reitō was a monk in Enō's monastery on Mount Sōkei. After Enō's death, Reitō spent the rest of his life—he died at age 95—devoted to tending Enō's stupa, which housed the kesa that Enō had received from his Master Daiman Kōnin as confirmation of his having fully awakened to the Truth. This kesa is said to be the one that Shakyamuni Buddha Transmitted to Makakashō. It is still in existence at the monastery. Ro is Enō's family name. It is used here to refer to the time when he worked as a lay laborer at Kōnin's monastery.

87

On Taking Refuge in the Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha

(Kie Buppōsō Hō)

Translator's Introduction: This discourse is also known as "On Taking Refuge in the Three Treasures" (*Kie Sambō*). As the postscript indicates, this discourse is an early draft which Dōgen did not finish before his death, though he apparently was planning to include it in his projected one-hundred-discourse *Shōbōgenzō*. It contains several quite long quotations, but Dōgen had not yet cited the sources of some of them in the text.

It says in the *Procedures for Cleanliness in a Zen Temple* (First fascicle, question 120), "Do you show respect for Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha?" It is quite clear that in India and China, the Buddhas and Ancestors authentically Transmitted the practice of making venerative offerings to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha out of respect for Them. If you do not take refuge in Them, you will not revere Them, and if you do not revere Them, you will not be able to take refuge in Them. We invariably receive the spiritual merit of taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha whenever there is a spiritual connection between Them and us sentient beings, as well as between Master and disciple. Whether we are in some exalted celestial state, or among ordinary human beings, or in some hell, or acting like some demon or beast, if a spiritual connection takes place, we do not fail to humbly take refuge in Them. Once we have taken refuge, we promote merit in life after life, in generation after generation, in existence after existence, and in place after place as we strive to accumulate merit and achieve supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. Even if we happen to be misled by bad companions or to meet up with some devilish hindrance so that our good roots are severed for the time being, or even if we act like an icchantika,* ultimately our good roots will continue on and we will promote their spiritual merit. The meritorious virtue of taking refuge in the Three Treasures is, ultimately, not subject to extensive decay.

Taking refuge in the Three Treasures means wholeheartedly acting from pure trust—be it while a Tathagata is in the world or be it after a Tathagata has become extinct—and, with hands in gasshō* and bowed head, reciting the following aloud:

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* See *Glossary.*

I humbly take refuge in the Buddha,
I humbly take refuge in the Dharma,
I humbly take refuge in the Sangha.

I humbly take refuge in the Buddha, the most venerated among humans,
I humbly take refuge in the Dharma, the most venerated among those who have forsaken their passions,
I humbly take refuge in the Sangha, the most venerated among those in our assemblies.

I have taken refuge in the Buddha,
I have taken refuge in the Dharma,
I have taken refuge in the Sangha.

In our aspiring to the far-off wisdom that is the fruition of Buddhahood, we begin by bringing into existence just such a protective garb.[1] Thus, even though our body and our mind right now, instant by instant, are arising and vanishing, our aspiration for Buddhahood will surely long continue to thrive until we fully realize our enlightenment.

The term *kie*, 'to take refuge', is made up of two characters. The first, *ki*, means 'to keep returning to' and the second, *e*, means 'to submit ourselves devotedly to'. Thus, *kie*, 'to take refuge', more literally means 'to devote oneself to returning to'. The form of this returning is like that of a child returning again and again to its parent. 'To submit ourselves devotedly to' is like people depending on their leader. In other words, this term is synonymous with 'to be rescued by', 'to be freed by'. Because 'the Buddha' refers to our Great Master, we therefore take refuge in Him. Because 'the Dharma' refers to good spiritual medicine, we take refuge in It. Because 'the Sangha' refers to excellent spiritual friends, we take refuge in them.

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A Chinese commentary on Mahayana* Buddhism has the following dialogue:

> Someone once asked a Master, "Why do we take refuge in these Three Treasures?"
>
> The Master answered, "Because in the long run, by making

1. That is, taking the Three Refuges acts like a suit of armor to protect us from whatever attacks us spiritually.

these Three Treasures what we return to, They can help us sentient beings free ourselves from the delusion of 'life and death' and realize the Great Awakening. This is why we take refuge in Them."

These Three Refuges are ultimately of astounding spiritual merit. In India, the word 'Buddha' was pronounced like *buddhaya*, and in China, the term 'supreme, fully perfected enlightenment' was translated simply as 'awakening'. In India, the term for 'the Teaching' was pronounced as *Dharma* in Sanskrit or as *Dhamma* in Pali. In China, it was translated by the character that we read as *hō*. All meanings of *hō*—good, bad, or neutral—are called 'dharma', but the Dharma that we now take refuge in is the Dharma that is the Wheel of the Law. What we call *sōgya* is pronounced as *Sangha* in India, and is translated as 'the harmonious community' in China. The following is how we habitually speak when praising Them.[2]

The Three Treasures as things that physically exist and which we preserve:

The Buddha Treasure as religious statues and pictures, along with shrines and reliquaries.

The Dharma Treasure as the Scriptural scrolls, which are made of yellow paper wound around a red rod, and which have been handed down to us.

The Sangha Treasure as those who shave their heads, dye their robes, and observe the Precepts which are the True Teaching.

The Three Treasures as the means for teaching sentient beings:

The Buddha Treasure as the World-honored Shakyamuni Buddha.

The Dharma Treasure as His turning of the Wheel of the Law, along with the saintly Teaching that He propagated.

The Sangha Treasure as the five companions, namely, Ajnyata Kaundinya and the others.[3]

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2. The source of the quotation that follows has not been located. It may be of Dōgen's composition.

3. An allusion to the five ascetics who accompanied Prince Siddhārtha while he was training as a forest hermit. They were the first of the Buddha's followers to realize the Truth and become arhats.

The Three Treasures as Embodiments of Truth:

The Buddha Treasure as what is provisionally called 'the five merits of the Dharma Body'.[4]

The Dharma Treasure as what is provisionally called 'the principle of the cessation of suffering through non-attachment'.

The Sangha Treasure as what is provisionally called 'the merit of pursuing through one's training what is beyond conventional forms of training'.

The Three Treasures as being essentially one and the same:

The Buddha Treasure as what is provisionally called 'That which realizes the Truth as ultimate enlightenment'.

The Dharma Treasure as that which is provisionally called 'That which is immaculate and free of any taint'.

The Sangha Treasure as that which is provisionally called 'those who have realized the Truth and, in harmony with It, are neither bound nor limited by It'.[5]

This is the way that one humbly takes refuge in the Three Treasures. If people are scant of good fortune or slight in merit, they do not hear even the name of the Three Treasures, so how could they possibly take refuge in Them!

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In the *Lotus Scripture*, there is the following poem:

All these besmirched creatures,
Pass through countless eons
Hearing not the name of the Triple Treasure
Due to their wretched karma.[*]

The *Lotus Scripture* is the karmic connection to the One Great Matter[*] of all Buddhas and Tathagatas. Within all the Teachings that were expressed by our Great Master, the Venerable Shakyamuni, the *Lotus Scripture* is the most sovereign and

4. That is, the five kinds of merit embodied in one who has realized enlightenment, namely, being free from any offences against the Precepts, being free from all delusory thoughts while remaining tranquil in heart, being possessed of wise discernment, being rid of all entanglements, and being aware of having become free of all entanglements.

5. That is, there is no tinge of fatalism in what such a one does.

our greatest teacher. All the other Scriptures and Teachings are as the *Lotus Scripture*'s loyal subjects or as Its familial relatives. What is voiced within the *Lotus Scripture* is the Truth. All that is expressed within our other Scriptures is tinged with expedient means, which is not the fundamental intent of the Buddha. Were you to bring forth what is expressed in the other Scriptures in order to evaluate what is in the *Lotus Scripture*, you would be getting things backwards. If they were not cloaked in the meritorious powers of the *Lotus Scripture*, these other Scriptures could not exist. All these other Scriptures are waiting to return to, and be in accord with, the *Lotus Scripture*. The *Lotus Scripture* contains what is being expressed here and now. Be aware that the merits of the Three Treasures are said to be the most esteemed and most sublime.

The World-honored One once said the following:

> When ordinary people become apprehensive over something that seems foreboding, they often seek refuge in such places as mountains or parklands, as well as in some monastery, up some tree, or in some mausoleum. These refuges are not particularly of the highest quality, nor are they the most valuable. People cannot free themselves from human suffering by relying on such refuges. When people take refuge in the Buddha, as well as in the Dharma and the Sangha, then, by means of their wise discernment, they continually observe everything from within the Four Noble Truths, namely, being aware of suffering, being aware of how suffering accumulates, being aware of how suffering is transcended forever, and being aware of the Noble Eightfold Path. Taking this refuge is to take the most excellent refuge; it is the one to be most valued. Without fail, it is by means of taking refuge in this way that we can rid ourselves of suffering.

The World-honored One has stated this clearly for the sake of all human beings. Human beings, vainly acting out of fear of what is foreboding, should not seek refuge in such beings as mountain spirits or demonic spirits, or in such places as the mausoleums of non-Buddhists, for there is no escape from human suffering by relying on such places for refuge.

To put it more broadly, following the false teachings of non-Buddhists, people engage in ascetic practices which take the form of precepts for oxen, precepts for deer, precepts for rakshasas, precepts for demons, precepts for dumb beasts, precepts for deaf beings, precepts for dogs, precepts for chickens, or precepts for pheasants, and they may adorn their bodies with ashes and let their

hair grow long. Or they may sacrifice a sheep, killing it after they have first chanted mantras. Or they may perform fire rituals for four months, or feast on air for seven days, or offer up hundreds of thousands of myriad blossoms to celestial beings. And they claim that, by such means, they will succeed in getting their wishes fulfilled. There is no truth in the belief that methods such as these can bring about liberation from suffering. Such methods are not praised by those of wise discernment, for people who do such practices continue to suffer in vain, devoid of any good outcome.

Because this is so, you should clearly examine whether you are vainly seeking to take refuge in some false path. Even if some method is different from the practice of the non-Buddhist precepts, if its underlying principle conforms to the principle of seeking refuge in a tree or a mausoleum, do not take such a refuge. A human body is hard to come by and the Buddhist Treasures are rarely met with. How sad it would be if you rashly spent your life as kith and kin of some demonic spirit or vainly let many lifetimes flow by while holding onto false views. By quickly taking refuge in the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, you will not only be liberated from suffering but you will also fully realize enlightenment.

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In the *Scripture on Rare Occurrences* it says, "Teaching others about the four earthly continents or the six heavenly worlds of desire so that all may realize the four stages* of arhathood does not equal the merit of one single person taking the Three Refuges." The four earthly continents are the eastern, western, southern, and northern continents.[6] Among them, those in the northern continent cannot be reached by the teaching of the Three Vehicles;* to successfully teach those in that continent how to become arhats would be rare indeed.[7] Even if such a benefit could be obtained, it would not be equal to the spiritual merit of teaching one single person how to take the Three Refuges. It is also rare for those in the six celestial worlds of desire to realize the Way. Even if we were able to help such beings attain the fourth stage of arhathood, it would not be equal to the merit of one single person taking the Three Refuges, so great and profound They are.

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6. These are the four 'continents' that surround Mount Sumeru. Mount Sumeru is considered to be the center of the universe, the pivotal point of the wheel of the six worlds of existence, as well as one's sitting place in meditation.

7. That is, the vehicles used by shravakas, pratekyabuddhas, and bodhisattvas are not effective enough to bestir the inhabitants of the northern continent from their customarily blissful state; only a Buddha—the One of the One Vehicle—has the capacity to do that.

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In the fourth of the *Āgama Scriptures* it says:

> There was once a celestial being in the Trayastrimsha Heaven who, upon seeing the five signs of his decay manifesting, knew he would be reborn as a wild boar. His bemoaning over this reached the ears of Lord Indra, who ruled over that heaven. Upon hearing the reason for his lamenting, Lord Indra called the celestial being forth and instructed him, saying, "You should take refuge in the Three Treasures." By immediately doing as he had been instructed, the being escaped being reborn as a boar.
>
> The Buddha, creating a poem for the occasion, spoke thus:
>
> *If beings take refuge in the Buddha,*
> *They fall not into the three evil paths,*[8]
> *Their passions spent, they dwell within some human or celestial realm*
> *And sure as sure will reach nirvana's holy shore.*
>
> Once this celestial being had taken the Three Refuges, he was reborn into a rich man's family and was also able to leave home life behind, ultimately reaching the state of one who has gone beyond being a novice.

In short, there is no scale upon which the merit of taking refuge in the Three Treasures can be weighed, for it is immeasurable and boundless.

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> When the World-honored One was in the world, twenty-six million hungering dragons, as a group, paid a visit to where the Buddha was staying. To a one, they were all shedding a veritable flood of tears as they addressed Him, saying, "All we desire is that You, out of Your pity, will rescue us from our suffering. O greatly compassionate World-honored One, we recall a time in a past age when we dwelt within the Buddha Dharma and had been able to leave home life behind, but we then went to great lengths to cultivate all manner of evil deeds. Because of these evil deeds, we have spent immeasurable eons in these bodies of ours, dwelling in the three evil

8. The three evil paths are the worlds of beasts, hungry ghosts, and those in hellish states.

> paths. Also, because of residual retribution, we have been reborn as dragons and experience exceedingly great suffering."
>
> The Buddha instructed the dragons, saying, "Without exception, you should forthwith take the Three Refuges and wholeheartedly practice what is good. Due to these conditions, you will encounter the last Buddha in the Eon of the Wise Ones, the one named He Who Has Arrived at the Tower.[9] During the generation of that Buddha, you will be able to rid yourselves of your wrongdoings."
>
> When the dragons heard these words, they all spent the rest of their lives in wholehearted devotion, each having taken the Three Refuges.

Aside from imparting the Three Refuges to them, the Buddha Himself had no other method or technique for helping rescue the dragons. When they left home life behind in a previous age, they had received the Three Refuges, but as retribution for their evil acts, they had become hungering dragons, and by that time there was no other means for rescuing them. This is why He had imparted the Three Refuges to them. You need to keep in mind that the merit from the Three Refuges is the most esteemed and the most sublime, mind-boggling in its profundity. The World-honored One had already clearly attested to the truth of this, and human beings should by all means accept it in faith. He did not have them recite the names of the Buddhas in the ten quarters, but simply had them take the Three Refuges. The Buddha's intention is profound, so who is there that would not sound its depths? Human beings today should quickly accept the Three Refuges rather than vainly reciting the name of every single Buddha, so that they do not foolishly remain in the dark and treat such great merit lightly.

> At that time, there was a blind female dragon among those assembled.[10] Her mouth was filled with festering tumors that were crawling with all manner of worms, a condition that resembled excrement. It was wickedly foul, like the uncleanness within a female organ at the time of menstruation, with a fetid stench that was difficult

9. The Eon of the Wise Ones is a reference to our present eon, so-called because there will be many who realize Buddhahood during that time.

10. In addition to its literal meaning, a dragon woman can be understood as someone who is intellectually brilliant. Also, her being blind may be understood literally or, possibly more to the point, figuratively, as being spiritually blind.

to bear. All kinds of things were feeding off her. Pus and blood were oozing out of her, and her whole body was constantly being bitten by mosquitoes and stung by wasps, while other poisonous insects were gnawing at her. The foul condition of her body was hard to look upon.

The World-honored One, seeing the dragon woman's blindness and the depth of her suffering, asked her from His great compassionate heart, "My little sister, what conditions have caused you to have such a wretched body? What deeds in a former life have brought you to such a state?"

The dragon woman replied, "World-honored One, this body of mine is now struck with such forms of suffering that I have not a moment's respite. Even should I try to put it in words, there is no way I have of expressing it. In thinking about my past over the previous thirty-six million years, for hundreds of thousands of years I have experienced suffering like this in the form of an evil dragon up to the point that it has not ceased even for a moment, day or night. The reason for this is that in the distant past, during the ninety-first eon, I became a female monastic within the Teaching of Bibashi Buddha, but I thought about lustful things, thoughts surpassing even those of some drunken person. Further, even though I had left home life behind, I was unable to live in accord with the Dharma, so I spread out my bedding in a temple and committed impure acts in order to satisfy my greedy heart and produce great pleasure. Sometimes I would seek out what belonged to others, often taking the alms that they had been given by the faithful. For just such reasons as these, I have been continually unable to receive the body of one in the human or celestial worlds, constantly being reborn in one of the three evil paths."

The Buddha then asked her, "If that is the case, when the eon that we are now in comes to an end, where, my little sister, will you be reborn?"

The dragon woman responded, "Due to the strength of the causal conditions of my past behavior, even if I were born in some other world when this eon has exhausted itself, driven by the winds of my evil deeds, I shall still be reborn in this state." The dragon woman then made the following plea, "O World-honored One of Great Compassion, pray, rescue me! I pray, rescue me!"

At that moment, the World-honored One scooped up some water in His hand and gave her instruction, saying "We call this water 'the medicine that brings the joy of one's true wishes being fulfilled'.

> Now, in all sincerity, I say to you that, in the distant past, I once cast my life aside in order to rescue a dove and, to that end, I did not waver in my resolve or feel regret in my heart. If these words of yours are true, you will be completely cured of your afflictions." The World-honored Buddha then took the water into His mouth and sprayed it forth over the blind dragon woman's body, whereupon she was cured of all her sores and stench.
>
> Now that she had been cured, she made the following plea, "I beg the Awakened One to permit me to receive the Three Refuges." Thereupon, the World-honored One gave the Three Refuges to the dragon woman.

This dragon woman had become a female monastic within the Teaching of Bibashi Buddha. Although she admitted that she had broken Precepts, once she had penetrated that Buddha's Teaching, she must have been aware of where she had become obstructed. Having now encountered Shakyamuni Buddha, she begged to receive the Three Refuges from Him. Receiving the Three Refuges from the Buddha must be said to be due to good, strong spiritual roots. The merit of meeting the Buddha must certainly have derived from the Three Refuges.[11] Although we are not blind dragons and we do not have the bodies of beasts, yet, unlike her, we did not personally encounter the Tathagata or receive the Three Refuges from the Buddha. The ability to actually encounter the Buddha is something far in the past, I am afraid to say. The World-honored One Himself bestowed upon her the Three Refuges. You should keep in mind that the merit from the Three Refuges is something that is extremely profound and immeasurable. For instance, when Shakrendra bowed to the wild fox and received the Three Refuges from it, everything depended on the depth of the merit of the Three Refuges.[12]

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> Once when the Buddha was staying in a banyan grove outside the city of Kapilavastu, His lay disciple Mahānāma of the Shakya clan came to where the Buddha was and asked him, "Just what <u>is</u> a lay Buddhist?"
>
> Thereupon, the Buddha explained the matter to him, saying, "If

11. That is, it derived from her having taken the Three Refuges when she became a monastic within the assembly of Bibashi Buddha.

12. Dōgen will tell the story of Shakrendra and the wild fox later in this discourse. Shakrendra is another name for Indra.

there are good disciples, male or female, who are in possession of their faculties and have accepted the Three Refuges, they are called lay Buddhists."

Mahānāma then asked, "World-honored One, what is meant by calling someone a ten-percent lay Buddhist?"

The Buddha replied, "My dear disciple Mahānāma, if one accepts the Three Refuges along with one of the Ten Great Precepts, that person is called a ten-percent lay Buddhist."

Becoming a disciple of the Buddha invariably depends on the Three Refuges. Whichever Precepts we may accept, we invariably take the Three Refuges, and only then do we take Precepts. Therefore, it is in accord with the Three Refuges that one obtains the Precepts.

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The following story is related in the *Dhammapada*:

Long ago, there was a guardian deity named Shakrendra, who intuitively knew that when his present life ended, he would be reborn as a donkey. Without ceasing to bemoan his fate, he said, "The only person who can save me from the suffering of such misfortune is the World-honored Buddha."

Thereupon, he went to where the Buddha was staying and, performing a full prostration, took refuge in the Buddha. He had not yet arisen from his prostration when his life came to an end and he arose within the womb of a donkey. The mother donkey broke free from her reins and smashed some bowls in a nearby pottery shop. The potter struck her, which ultimately caused her to abort, whereby Shakrendra reemerged in his guardian deity body.

The Buddha said, "Just as you were dying, you were taking refuge in the Three Treasures, so the retribution for your wrongdoings had already come to an end." Upon hearing this, Shakrendra obtained the first fruits of arhathood.

In sum, the World-honored Buddha was unsurpassed in rescuing sentient beings from the sufferings and misfortunes of the world. This is why Shakrendra hastened to call on the World-honored One. While he was prostrate on the ground, his present life came to an end and he was reborn within a donkey's womb. Through the merit of his taking refuge in the Buddha, the mother donkey broke her reins and smashed dishes in the potter's shop. The potter struck her and her body was so injured that she aborted the donkey colt in her womb. Thereupon, the guardian

deity returned to enter his former body. His attaining the first fruits of arhathood upon hearing what the Buddha said was due to the strength of the merit from his taking refuge in the Three Treasures.

In other words, the strength of the Three Refuges not only freed Shakrendra from the three evil paths, it also permitted him to reenter his guardian deity body. And not only did he gain the fruits and rewards from being in a celestial place, but he also became a saintly being who had realized the first stage of arhathood. Truly, the ocean of merit of the Three Treasures is immeasurable, unbounded. While the World-honored One was in the world, ordinary people and those in lofty positions enjoyed the blessings and good fortune from this. Now, in the final, degenerate five hundred years following the disappearance of the Tathagata, what can we humans do? Well, such things as statues and pictures of the Tathagata, as well as His relics, are still housed in the world. If we take refuge in these, we will also receive the merits as described above.[13]

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The following is recounted in the *Scripture of Unparalleled Events*:

> The Buddha once said, "I recall a time innumerable eons ago when there was a wild fox on a mountain in the great kingdom of Vima.[14] It so happened that it was being pursued by a lion who was bent on making a meal of it. As it fled, it fell into a well and was unable to get out. After three days had passed, it realized that it was going to die there, and so composed the following poem:
>
> *Oh, woe is me! To be thus on suffering's brink,*
> *Losing my life, drowned deep in some hillside well.*
> *How transient all myriad things prove to be!*
> *Alas that I cannot leave my body for the lion's feast.*
> *In homage, I take refuge in the Buddhas of the ten quarters.*
> *May They know that my heart is pure and free of all self.*
>
> "At that moment, Shakrendra overheard someone taking refuge in the Buddha. Awestruck, his hair stood on end. Being mindful of the

13. However, not because there is some magical power inherent in these objects, but because they are reminders to trust in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and to keep to the Precepts.

14. The kingdom of Vima is a place within Jambudvipa, the legendary continent south of Mount Sumeru.

Buddha of old, he thought to himself, 'I, a solitary drop of dew, lack a Master to guide me as I drown myself in my addictions to sensory greeds.'

"Thereupon, along with a celestial host of eighty thousand, he flew down, desiring to explore more closely what was going on in the well. He saw the wild fox at the bottom of the well, attempting to claw its way up and out, but without success. Once more thinking only of himself, Shakrendra then said, 'Saintly person, you may well be thinking that you are lacking in some way. Though I now see the form and figure of a wild fox, clearly you are a bodhisattva* and not someone who is limited only to mundane abilities, for it was not a mundane verse that you recited, O benevolent being. I pray that you will give voice to the essentials of the Dharma for the sake of this host of celestial beings.'

"At this point, the wild fox looked up and replied, 'Even though you are a guardian deity of the Dharma, you have obviously not had instruction in It. While a Dharma Master is down below you, you have placed yourself above him. You ask for the essentials of the Dharma, but completely fail to show proper respect![15] Because the Waters of Dharma are untainted and pure, they can save people, so how come you crave to have them by prideful means?'

"When the guardian deity heard this, he was filled with shame. The celestial beings who attended upon him were startled and laughed nervously. Then one said, 'Although our celestial lord has come down to this place, that does not greatly benefit us.'

"Thereupon, the guardian deity Shakrendra addressed the celestial beings, saying, 'I pray, do not, in this regard, hold onto your astonishment and fears. What he said is undoubtedly due to my self-deception and greed, along with my lack of virtue. By all means, we must listen to the essentials of the Dharma from this person.'

"He then lowered his celestial robe to help the fox, who grabbed hold of it and climbed out from the well. The celestial beings

15. In Buddhism, the traditional courtesy is to offer a meal to the Dharma Master as alms and then, after the meal, to ask the Master to give a Dharma talk whilst seated in a higher seat than those for whom the talk is intended. To ignore such a courtesy and put oneself above the Dharma Master is therefore seen as the height of disrespect. Shakrendra, so eager to hear the Teaching for His own sake, had failed to extract the wild fox from the well, much less offer him a meal, before asking for spiritual Teaching.

> prepared a meal of nectar for the creature. After the wild fox had finished its meal, its vitality was restored. In the midst of calamity, it had met with such unanticipated good fortune that its heart leapt for joy, and its delight was immeasurable. The wild fox then gave extensive explanation of the essentials of the Dharma for the sake of Shakrendra and his host of celestial beings."

This story is called 'Shakrendra's bowing to an animal and taking it for his teacher'. Clearly, you need to realize that the guardian deity's taking a wild fox for his teacher is evidence of how difficult it is to hear the words Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Now, in accord with the help from our good deeds in past lives, we have encountered the Dharma bequeathed us by the Tathagata so that, day and night, we may hear the precious name of the Three Treasures, without regressing over time. This is surely the essence of the Dharma. Even Mara, the Lord of Bedevilment, along with his demons of desire, all escape tribulation by taking refuge in the Three Treasures. How much more can others strive to pile up merit and accumulate virtue by means of the meritorious nature of the Three Treasures! So, why, pray, would you neglect to fathom them?

To summarize, in practicing the Way as disciples of the Buddha, we first reverently bow to the Three Treasures in all ten quarters, then we call on the Three Treasures in all ten quarters to come to us as we offer incense and scatter flowers to Them, and only then do we perform our spiritual disciplines. This is an excellent example of practice from ancient times, an age-old ritual of the Buddhas and Ancestors. If there are any who have never yet done this ritual of taking refuge in the Three Treasures, you need to know that theirs is a non-Buddhist teaching and that it may well be the teaching of the Lord of Bedevilment. The Dharma of Buddha after Buddha and Ancestor after Ancestor invariably begins with the ceremony of taking refuge in the Three Treasures.

On a day during the summer retreat in the seventh year of the Kenchō era (1255), I finished making this proofed copy from my late Master's draft. It had not yet reached the stage of a clean copy, much less a middling draft. Undoubtedly, he would have made additions and deletions. Since such a process is now impossible, I am leaving the Master's draft just as it is.[16]

I made this copy on the twenty-first day of the fifth lunar month in the second year of the Kōan era (July 1, 1278), whilst staying at Shinzenkō-ji Temple in Nakahama, Echizen Province.

Giun

16. This first portion of the postscript is clearly by Ejō.

88

On the Absolute Certainty of Cause and Effect

(Jinshin Inga)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse Dōgen once again takes up the kōan story of Hyakujō's fox, which he had commented on in Discourse 73: On the Great Practice (*Daishugyō)*. Here, however, he presents a series of poems that various Masters had composed in relation to the subject of cause and effect, all of which Dōgen feels support non-Buddhist views. His own comments make quite clear that no one, under any circumstances, is ever free of cause and effect.

Hyakujō Ekai was a Dharma heir of Baso. Whenever people came to hear him give a public Dharma talk, there was an old man who always came into the Dharma Hall immediately following those in the monastic assembly. He always listened to the Dharma talk and then, when the monks would leave the hall, he would leave at the same time. Then one day, he lingered behind.

Thereupon, the Master asked him, "You who are standing here, who are you?"

The old man replied, "To speak truly, I am a non-human being. Long ago during the eon of Kashō Buddha,[1] I dwelt upon this mountain as Abbot. Then, one day, a trainee asked me, 'Is even the one who does the Great Practice still subject to cause and effect?' I replied that such a one is no longer subject to cause and effect. After that, as a consequence, I was reduced to being reborn as a wild fox for five hundred lives. I now beseech you, O Venerable Monk, say something that will turn me around, for I long to rid myself of this wild fox's attitude of mind."

Thereupon, he asked the Master, "Is even someone who does the Great Practice subject to cause and effect?"

The Master replied, "Such a one is not blind to causality."

Upon hearing these words, the old man had a great awakening. Prostrating himself before the Master, he said, "Since I have already

1. Among the Seven Buddhas, the One whose eon directly preceded that of Shakyamuni Buddha.

shed the outer trappings of a wild fox, I have taken to dwelling on the far side of this mountain. Dare I ask the Venerable Abbot to perform for me a monk's funeral service?"

The Master had the senior monk who supervises the Meditation Hall strike the wooden gong to signal the monks to assemble so that he might tell them that, after their meal, there would be a funeral service for a deceased monk. The whole assembly was at ease with this, though they wondered about it, since there was no sick person in the temple infirmary. After the meal, the Master simply led the assembly up to the base of a rock on the other side of the mountain, where they saw him use his traveling staff to point out the corpse of a wild fox. They cremated the remains in accordance with the appropriate procedure.

At nightfall, the Master went to the Dharma Hall where he gave the monks a talk on the preceding events. His Dharma heir Ōbaku then asked him, "In the past, the man said the wrong thing to turn his disciple around and, as a consequence, was reduced to being a wild fox for five hundred lives. Suppose he had not made this mistake, what would have become of him?"

The Master said, "Come up close and I will tell you."

Thereupon, Ōbaku went on up and gave the Master a slap. The Master clapped his hands and laughed, saying, "I've always thought that the beards of foreigners were red, and here is a red-bearded foreigner."

This story occurs in the *T'ien-sheng Era Record of the Far-reaching Torch.* Even so, people doing the training who are not clear about the fundamental principle of causality fall into the error of denying cause and effect, and to no avail. Sad to say, they tend to be frivolous and casually let the authority of the words and ways of the Ancestors go into decline. 'Not being subject to cause and effect' is surely their denial of causality, and accordingly, they fall into evil realms.[2] Clearly, 'not being blind to cause and effect' is what 'being profoundly convinced of cause and effect' means, and accordingly, those who hear this rid themselves of evil conditions. Do not doubt this: do not mistrust it. Among those of our recent generations who call themselves students of Zen practice, there are many who have denied causality. And how do we know that they have denied causality? Because

2. That is, the three worlds of hungry ghosts, animals, and those in hells.

they are of the opinion that there is no difference between 'not being subject to' and 'not being blind to'. Accordingly, we know that they have denied causality.

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Our Nineteenth Indian Ancestor, the Venerable Kumorata, once said the following:

> For the time being, we may say that retribution for our good and bad acts has three periods, but, in general, worldly people only see a benevolent person coming to an early end while some violent person is having a long life, or see an evil one enjoying good fortune while a virtuous one is experiencing calamities, and thereby worldly people conclude that cause and effect is a dead issue and that 'wrong behavior' and 'happiness' are devoid of any significance. Such people in particular are ignorant of the fact that shadows and sounds are in accord with their source, without even a hair's breadth of discrepancy between them. And even with the passing of hundreds of thousands of myriad eons, there is no diminishing of that connection.

Clearly, we see from what this patch-robed monk says that he never denied cause and effect. Present-day trainees who have been negligent in their training with the traces left by our ancient teachers have not clarified what the kind instruction of this Ancestor of our tradition is. Those who have been negligent in this training, while at the same time calling themselves good spiritual friends and guides for ordinary people and those in lofty positions, are malicious troops of scholars and great thieves preying on the ordinary and the lofty. Those of you who have come before me and those who will come after me, do not teach the younger generation or the veteran monks with the aim of negating the existence of cause and effect, for this is false teaching and not the Dharma of the Buddhas and Ancestors. It is due to your being negligent in your studies that you have fallen into this false view.

Patch-robed monks, among others in present-day China, are accustomed to saying, "Even though we have received a human body and have encountered the Dharma of the Buddha, we still do not know the details of one or two of our past lives. The former Hyakujō who became a wild fox was able to know five hundred of his past lives. So, it is obvious that he did not lapse into that state due to retribution for his past deeds. It must be as Meditation Master Dōan said in a poem:

Even if restrained by golden chains or unseen barriers,
nowhere do I abide.
Going amidst all manner of beings, I just roll on through
cycles of birth and death."

This is the way that this bunch who are considered to be good spiritual friends and guides see and understand the matter. It is hard to place such a way of seeing and understanding within the house of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Among humans, and foxes, as well as those in the other worlds of existence, there are those who have the ability to get a glimpse of their past lives. Be that as it may, such an ability is not the seed of clear understanding, but is what someone experiences from having previously performed wicked deeds. The World-honored One, for the sake of the ordinary and the lofty, has spoken extensively about this fundamental principle. Not to know it is the height of negligence in one's study. How sad! Even if someone were to know a thousand of his or her past lives, or even ten thousand of them, that would not necessarily bring forth the Buddha's Dharma. There are non-Buddhists who already know of their past lives from over eighty thousand eons, but they have still not produced something we could call 'the Buddha's Dharma'. To know a mere five hundred past lives is no great ability.

In present-day Sung China, among those doing the practice of seated meditation, the folks who are the most in the dark are those who do not know that the teaching of not being subject to cause and effect is a false view. Sad to say, in a place where the genuine Dharma of the Tathagata has spread abroad and there has been a genuine Transmission from Ancestor to Ancestor, heretical gangs have formed who deny cause and effect. Those who are exploring the Matter* through training with their Master should by all means hasten to make clear the fundamental principle of cause and effect. The later Hyakujō's principle of not being blind to cause and effect means not ignoring the presence of causality. Hence, the underlying principle is clear: we feel the effects of the causes that we put into action. In sum, if you have not clarified what the Buddha's Dharma is, do not go about recklessly preaching for the sake of the worldly and the celestial.

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Our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna once said:

> If, like non-Buddhists, you argue against there being cause and effect in the world, then there could be no past or future. If you argue

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* See *Glossary.*

> against there being cause and effect in the realm of enlightenment, then there could be no Triple Treasure, Four Noble Truths, or four stages* of arhathood.

Be very clear about this: no matter whether it is secular people or monastics who are arguing against the existence of cause and effect, they will be off the Path. To assert that the present is unreal is tantamount to saying, "One's physical form exists in this particular state, but one's spiritual nature has been returning to the enlightened state for ever so long, for one's spiritual nature is one's mind, and one's mind is not the same as one's body." To understand the issue in this way is to be off the Path. And there are those who say, "When someone dies, they invariably return to the ocean of spiritual nature. Even if they have not studied the Buddha's Dharma, they will naturally return to the ocean of enlightenment, at which point the wheel of birth and death will cease to turn. This is why there is no future life." This is the non-Buddhist doctrine of nihilism. Even if they resemble monks physically, folks who hold to such wrong views are not disciples of the Buddha at all, but simply people who are off the Path. In short, to deny cause and effect is to make the mistake of denying the existence of past and future. These people's denial of cause and effect stems from their having failed to train under a genuinely good spiritual guide. Those who train for a long time under a genuinely good spiritual guide will not hold to the false view that denies cause and effect. We need to reverently trust the compassionate instruction of our Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna and humbly place it above our head.

❀

The monk Yōka Genkaku was an outstanding disciple of Daikan Enō. Originally, he trained in the Tendai tradition of the *Lotus Scripture*, sharing quarters with Great Master Sakei Genrō, the Eighth Chief Master of the Tendai tradition. Once while Genkaku was perusing the *Great Scripture on the Buddha's Parinirvana* a golden light suddenly filled his room, and he profoundly experienced a spiritual awakening to That which transcends birth and death. He then proceeded to pay a visit to Enō to report to our Sixth Ancestor what he had experienced. Our Sixth Ancestor then gave him the seal* that confirmed his awakening. Later, Genkaku composed "The Song That Attests to the Way", in which there are the lines:

> *Vacant-headed notions of emptiness which deny causality*
> *Bring about calamities as dire as a raging conflagration*
> *or a rampaging flood.*

Be very clear about this: denial of causality will bring about calamities. The old virtuous ones of past generations were quite clear about causality, whereas trainees in more recent times all tend to be skeptical. But even in present times, there are those who cultivate the Enlightened Heart and, for the sake of the Buddha Dharma, study the Buddha Dharma. Like the ancient worthies, they will be clear about cause and effect. To say that there are no causes and no effects is to be off the Path.

❀

In extolling the view of cause and effect contained in Genkaku's lines, our Old Buddha Wanshi once said:

> *It's like a foot of water making a ten-foot wave:*
> *There's nothing to be done about five hundred past lives.*
> *Though people go on about 'not being subject to' or 'not being blind to',*
> *They're all still in a pit, entangled in the tendrils of discriminatory thought.*
>
> *Ha, ha, ha! What a laugh!*
> *Simply, do you get It, or not?*
> *If you're truly detached and rid of conventionalities,*
> *You'll not try to inhibit me from saying, 'Goo goo, ga ga!"*
>
> *The gods sing and the heavenly spirits dance, as the music comes forth all by itself,*
> *And clapping hands join in with merry shouts of laughter.*

Now, the lines,

> *Though people go on about 'not being subject to' or 'not being blind to',*
> *They're all still in a pit, entangled in the tendrils of discriminatory thought,*

are tantamount to his saying that 'not being subject to' and 'not being blind to' really amount to the same thing.[3]

3. That is, both phrases are the product of the discriminative thinking of those who have not yet 'got It'.

In short, this discussion of 'cause and effect' has not yet completely exhausted the term's fundamental principle. And why? Because even though Wanshi has shed his wild fox's attitude of mind right here and now before us, he does not say that after people escape from the attitude of mind of their wild fox, they are reborn in the human world, nor does he say that they are reborn in the celestial world, nor does he say that they are reborn in any other world, but this is something we should wonder about. Once people have dropped off their wild fox's attitude of mind, those who should be reborn in a favorable world are reborn among celestial beings or among ordinary human beings, whereas those who should be reborn in an unfavorable world are reborn in one of the four unfavorable worlds.[4] Once people have dropped off their wild fox's attitude of mind, they will not be reborn in some place other than one of the six worlds* of existence. If someone says that when we die, we return to an ocean of spiritual nature or we return to a universal self, such are the views of those who are off the Path.

❀

Meditation Master Engo Kokugon once said in a poem commenting on an ancient Ancestor's kōan* story:

When fish swim, they may muddy up the water;
When birds fly, they may shed a feather.
It is hard indeed to escape the ever-bright Mirror.[5]
The Great Void knows no bounds.

Once something has passed, it is far, far gone.
The five hundred rebirths were simply dependent on the fox's Great Practice with cause and effect.
A thunderbolt may suddenly smash a mountain and the wind churn up the sea,
But the Pure Gold, though refined a hundred times, never changes Its color.

Even this verse leans towards denying cause and effect and, at the same time, tends to support the view of eternalism.[6]

4. That is, favorable or unfavorable for hearing the Dharma.

5. The ever-bright Mirror reflects the karmic consequences of our actions.

6. Eternalism is the belief that the self and the world are both eternal.

❀

The monk known as Meditation Master Daie Sōkō once said the following in a congratulatory poem:

> *'Not being subject to' and 'not being blind to'*
> *Are merely stones and clods of earth.*
> *Having met them along the path between the rice fields,*
> *I pulverized the silver mountain.*
> *Clapping my hands, I give a hearty "Ho, ho!" wherever I am,*
> *For here in Kōshū, this foolish Laughing Buddha is to be found.*[7]

Present-day people in Sung dynasty China consider monks like Daie to be Masters skillful in leading trainees, but Daie's opinions and understanding never reached the level of skillful means in instructing others in the Buddha Dharma. If anything, he leaned towards naturalism.[8]

❀

Speaking more generally, there are more than thirty who have composed poems and commentaries on this story of Hyakujō's fox, and not even one of them has had the slightest doubt that 'not being subject to cause and effect' means 'doubting cause and effect'. Sad to say, these persons have not clarified what cause and effect is and have vainly wasted their lives, going astray in a state of confusion. In your exploring of the Buddha Dharma through your training with a Master, number one is clarifying what cause and effect is. Undoubtedly, those who deny cause and effect will, in their fierce pursuit of profits, give rise to false views and thereby become people who sever their own good spiritual roots.

To summarize, the principle of cause and effect is quite clear, and it is totally impersonal: those who fabricate evil will fall into a lower state, whereas those who practice good will rise to a higher state, and without the slightest disparity. If cause and effect had become null and void, Buddhas would never have appeared in the world and our Ancestral Master would not have come from the West. In short, it

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7. 'The silver mountain' is an allusion to a mountain that is impossible to scale. It is used in Zen Buddhism as a metaphor for the realm of enlightenment, which is beyond discriminative thought.

8. In Buddhism, naturalism is the belief that things just happen to happen, which is a denial of cause and effect.

would be impossible for human beings to encounter a Buddha and hear the Dharma. The fundamental principle of cause and effect was not clear to Confucius or Lao-tzu. It has only been clarified and Transmitted by Buddha after Buddha and by Ancestor after Ancestor. Because the good fortune of those who are seeking to learn in these degenerate days of the Dharma is scant, they do not encounter a genuine Master or hear the authentic Dharma, and so they are not clear about cause and effect. If you deny causality as a result of this error, you will experience excessive misfortune, since you would be as ignorant as an ox or a horse. Even if you have not committed any evil act other than denying cause and effect, the poison of this view will immediately be terrible. Therefore, if you who are exploring the Matter through your training with a Master have put your heart that seeks awakening as the first and foremost matter, and therefore wish to repay the vast benevolence of the Buddhas and the Ancestors, you should swiftly clarify what causality really is.

On a day during the summer retreat in the seventh year of the Kenchō era (1255), I copied this from the Master's draft. It had yet to reach the state of a cleaned-up draft, much less a clean copy. Even so, I have made this copy of it.

Ejō

89

On Karmic Retribution in the Three Temporal Periods

(Sanji Gō)

Translator's Introduction: In this discourse, Dōgen discusses the good or ill recompense we receive immediately in this lifetime, in our next lifetime, or in some later future lifetime as a result of our deliberate acts. He gives the Buddhist perspective on why people who seem to be doing good deeds may experience misfortune and why people who are continually committing wrongful acts may seem to be enjoying good fortune.

When our Nineteenth Ancestor, the Venerable Kumorata, arrived at a country in Central India, there was a virtuous monk there named Shayata who raised a question with him, saying, "My parents have always had faith in the Triple Treasure, but they have continually been subject to illnesses and all their endeavors have come to naught, whereas our neighbor, who persists in behaving like Chandala the Outlaw, has always been fit and healthy and his illegal undertakings successful. How come he has had such good fortune and where have we gone wrong?"

The Venerable One responded, "Why do you entertain such doubts? The karmic* effects of good and bad actions will come to fruition in one of three temporal periods. In general, people see that the benevolent may suffer untimely or violent deaths whilst the cruel may live long, or that the wicked may be fortunate whilst the morally upright meet with misfortune. As a result of this, they say that there is no cause and effect and that 'vice' and 'good deeds' are meaningless words. Above all, they do not understand that consequences inevitably follow upon even the slightest actions, that even were hundreds of thousands of myriad eons to elapse these consequences would still not be wiped away, and that cause and effect are, of necessity, in accord with each other."

Once Shayata heard these words, he was immediately freed from his doubts.

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* See *Glossary.*

The Venerable Kumorata was the nineteenth in line from the Tathagata to receive the Dharma. The Tathagata had personally mentioned his name and prophesied his future Buddhahood.[1] Not only had Kumorata clarified what the Dharma of the Venerable Shakyamuni Buddha was and received the authentic Transmission, he had also fully realized the Dharma of all Buddhas in the three temporal periods.

Having profited from his present question, the Venerable Shayata became a follower of the Venerable Kumorata and undertook the study of the authentic Dharma, ultimately becoming our Ancestral Master of the twentieth generation. Here, too, the World-honored One had prophesied much earlier that our Twentieth Ancestor would be Shayata. So, above all, you need to learn what our Ancestral Masters knew by studying their comments on the Buddha Dharma. Do not join in with the flock of that present-day worldly bunch with false opinions, who are ignorant of cause and effect, who are in the dark about karmic retribution from deliberate acts, who know nothing of the three temporal periods, and who do not know the difference between good and evil.

What we call the three temporal periods are the three time periods in which we receive the retribution from our good and evil acts. These are, first, the retribution experienced in one's present life; second, the retribution experienced in one's next life; and third, the retribution experienced in some later future life. Through your practice of the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors you learn, first off, to clarify what the principle of karmic retribution in these three time periods is. If you do not do so, you will make many errors and fall into false views. You will not just fall into false views, you will also give rise to evil ways and undergo suffering for a long time. By failing to continue developing your good roots, you will lose much spiritual merit and will have long-standing obstructions on your path to enlightenment.

The karmic retribution experienced in these three temporal periods comes from both good and evil acts.

二

In the first temporal period, the retribution is experienced in one's present lifetime. That is to say, when we engage in karmic activities in this lifetime and then, according to the seeds we have sown, receive the fruits thereof in this lifetime, we call this 'retribution experienced in one's present lifetime'.

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1. That is, the Buddha had predicted that someone in the future would be called Kumorata, 'The Youthful One', and that he would realize Buddhahood in his lifetime.

In other words, when there is someone who fashions his life by good or by evil actions, and then receives the consequences of those actions in this lifetime, we call that ‘retribution experienced in one’s present life’.

二

The following story is an example of creating evil and receiving the consequences therefrom in this present life.

> There was once a woodcutter who had gone off into the mountains when he encountered a blizzard and completely lost his way. It was at that time when the day was coming to an end. The snow was so deep and it was so freezing cold that he knew he would certainly be dead before long. He made his way onwards and had just entered a dense, dark patch of woods when he saw a bear. There it was, right before him in the woods. Its body was a deep blue-black, and its eyes were like two glowing coals. The man was filled with terror, certain that he would lose his life, but the creature was, in truth, a bodhisattva* who had manifested in the form of a bear.
>
> Seeing the man’s dreadful fear, it then spoke in a consoling manner, counseling him, “Now you must not be afraid. Though one’s parents may sometimes harbor wrong intentions towards their child, I do not harbor evil thoughts towards you.” It then came forward, lifted the man onto its back, and carried him into a cave where it warmed him with its own body until it completely resuscitated him. Gathering some roots and berries, it encouraged him to eat what he would. Fearing lest the woodcutter should die, it lay down and held him in its arms. In this way it kindly tended him until six days had passed. On the seventh day, the sky cleared and the pathway became visible. The bear, having realized that the man desired to return home, again gathered sweet berries to satisfy his hunger and sustain him. It accompanied him out of the woods, and ever so politely bade him farewell. The man fell to his knees and said, “How can I ever repay you?” The bear replied, “I seek no recompense now. I only pray that, just as I protected your body these past days, you will also do the same with my life.” The man respectfully agreed.
>
> As the man was coming down the mountain shouldering his firewood, he encountered two hunters, who asked him, “What kind of creatures have you encountered on the mountain?” The woodcutter replied, “I haven’t seen any creatures apart from just one bear.” The

hunters begged him, "Can you show us where?" The woodcutter replied, "If I can have two-thirds of your prey, I will gladly show you." The hunters agreed and they all went off together, ultimately slaying the bear. They divided the meat into three parts. As the woodcutter was just about to pick up the bear's flesh with his two hands, he lost the use of his arms, as if they were a string of pearls that had been cut or a lotus root that had been sliced off. The hunters were startled by this and, in their concern, asked him what had happened. The woodcutter, feeling deeply ashamed, gave a detailed account of what he had done. The two hunters upbraided the woodcutter, saying, "That bear had such great compassion for you! How could you possibly have carried out such a wicked act of betrayal now? It is truly a wonder that your whole body hasn't rotted away!" Thereupon the hunters, in company with the man, gave the meat in charity to a monastery.

At that time, the elderly and virtuous abbot, one who had the wondrous ability to fathom what others desired, had entered a state of deep contemplation, thereby knowing that it was the flesh of a great bodhisattva who had created benefits and joy for the sake of all sentient beings. Coming out from his meditative state, he then spoke to his assembly concerning this matter. The assembly, hearing the story, was appalled and saddened. Together, they gathered fragrant wood and cremated the bear's body. They then collected what bones remained, placed them in a stupa,* and made prostrations and offerings to them.

The karma from an evil act, such as the one in this story, will inevitably incur its recompense, regardless of whether its effects are received immediately or come to fruition in a future life.

Effects such as these are called 'misfortunate recompense experienced in one's present life'. To generalize, when receiving a kindness, we should intend to repay it. In doing kindnesses for others, do not seek for recompense. As in this story, one who would turn against a kindly being and thereby bring harm to such a one will inevitably receive evil karma. O my fellow beings, may you never have a heart like that of this woodcutter! Once out of the woods, he took his leave of the bear, and even though he asked how he could possibly repay the bear's kindness, when he reached the foot of the mountain and met the hunters, he greedily sought two-thirds of the meat. Being dragged by his avarice, he slew one who had shown him great kindness. May you, both laity and monks, ever have a heart that does not fail to

recognize kindness. The power of evil karma to sever both your hands strikes faster than any sword could cut them off.

二

> Long ago, King Kanishka of the nation of Gandhara had a eunuch—one born lacking normal male genitals—who supervised the affairs of the court. While momentarily departing from the city, he encountered a herd of cattle, at least five hundred in number, being led in through the city gate. He asked the herdsman, "What kind of cattle are these?" The herdsman replied, "They are bulls being taken to be castrated." Upon hearing this, the eunuch thought to himself, "Due to evil karma in a past life, I received a body lacking normal male genitals. I shall now use my wealth to rescue these bulls from just such a hardship." He ultimately paid their price and then set them all free.
>
> Because of the power of this good karma, the eunuch's body was fully restored to that of a normal male. Filled with profound joy, he went back into the city and, standing at the palace gate, sent a messenger to ask the king's permission to enter for an audience. The king had him summoned, wondering why he had asked for an audience. Thereupon, the eunuch presented the above in great detail. Upon hearing it, the king was surprised and delighted. He generously bestowed on his servant great treasure and, in turn, promoted him to a high office, making him privy to the external affairs of state.
>
> Good karma like this inevitably receives its fruits, either immediately or in a future life.

Clearly you need to realize that to rescue animals, even though their lives may not be treasured, earned the man good fruits. How much more so, by our honoring the kind and the virtuous, shall we garner all manner of good.[2] Effects such as these are called 'fortunate recompense experienced in one's present life'. There are many stories like these, which arise from either good or evil deeds, but there is not time enough to quote them all.

2. An allusion to the four cultivated fields of merit: that derived from being kind to animals, to the needy, to one's parents, and to the saintly ones of the Three Vehicles.

二

> In the second temporal period, retribution is experienced in one's next lifetime. That is to say, when we engage in karmic activities in this lifetime and then, according to the seeds we have sown, receive the fruits thereof in our next lifetime, we call this 'retribution experienced in one's next lifetime'.

In other words, when there are people who have committed any of the five most treacherous deeds, they will inevitably fall into a hellish state in their next lifetime. 'The next lifetime' means the lifetime that follows this lifetime. For other wrongdoers, there are those who will fall into a hellish state in their next lifetime, and there are those who would sink into a hellish state in their next lifetime were it not for some intervening good karma. For these five most treacherous deeds, however, people invariably fall into a hellish state along with whatever karma they carry with them into their next lifetime. 'The next life' is also called 'one's second life'.

二

> The five most treacherous deeds are, first, killing one's father; second, killing one's mother; third, killing an arhat;* fourth, shedding the blood of a Buddha; and fifth, destroying the harmony within the Sangha.

With these five most treacherous deeds, those who commit just one of them will invariably fall into a hellish state in their next lifetime. There have been those who have committed all five of the most treacherous deeds, such as the female monastic Utpalavarna during the time of the Kashō Buddha.[3] And there have been those who have committed just one of them, such as King Ajatashatru who killed his father during the lifetime of Shakyamuni Buddha. And there have been those who committed three of these most treacherous deeds. During the time of Shakyamuni Buddha there was Ajita, who killed his father, his mother, and an arhat. This Ajita committed these acts while in home life. Later, he was permitted to leave home life behind and become a monk. The monk Devadatta committed three of the most treacherous deeds, namely, creating a schism in the Sangha, shedding the Buddha's blood, and killing an arhat. He was also called Daibadatto, which translates as Tennetsu (He of Celestial Passion).

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3. Utpalavarna's story is told in several discourses, with the most extensive account being given in Discourse 84: On the Spiritual Merits of the Kesa *(Kesa Kudoku)*.

The story of Devadatta's creating a schism in the Sangha is as follows:

> Devadatta induced five hundred monks who were either foolish or new to the training to follow him atop Mount Gaya where he promoted five false teachings, thereby splitting his followers away from the rest of the Sangha who kept true to the Buddha's Teaching. Shariputra, being weary of this, caused Devadatta to fall into a deep sleep, while Moggallana roused Devadatta's assembly and attempted to get them to return. When Devadatta awoke and saw what was happening, he gave rise to a vow that he would make the two disciples pay for their actions. Lifting up a boulder that was thirty hastas high and fifteen hastas wide, he hurled it at the Buddha.[4] A mountain spirit intercepted the stone with its hand, shattering it into shards, one of which wounded the Buddha's foot, causing it to bleed.

According to this account, Devadatta's splitting of the Sangha came first and the spilling of blood happened later. According to other accounts, it is not clear which came first, the splitting of the Sangha or the spilling of blood. Also, Devadatta beat to death with his own fists the female monk Utpalavarna, who was, by that time, an arhat. These are his three most treacherous deeds.

In his wicked attempt to split the Sangha, he tried to spread false teaching and to split himself off from the monks who kept to the Teaching of the Buddha. Attempting to spread false teaching can only occur in three of the continents, the northern continent being excluded.[5] These attempts to spread false practices began while the Tathagata was still alive and will continue to occur right up to the time when the Dharma has disappeared. False teachings such as these occurred throughout all three of these continents only while the Tathagata was still alive. After His death, they appeared only in the southern continent of Jambudvipa* and not in the other continents. Expounding such false teachings is the most wicked act of all.

As a result of his committing these three treacherous deeds, Devadatta fell into a hellish state of constant suffering in his next lifetime.[6] There are people who

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4. A hasta is an Indian unit of measurement equivalent to roughly 18 inches.

5. The northern continent is excluded because it is inhabited only by blissful celestial beings, who would be impervious to what monks were up to.

6. This state of constant suffering is known as the Avichi Hell and is the lowest hellish state among the six worlds of existence. Though the length of time someone may be in such a state is unpredictable, in Buddhism it is not a place of eternal damnation.

have gone to great lengths to commit all five of these treacherous acts, and there are people who have committed only one of them, and there are those who, like Devadatta, have committed three of them. All of them fall into hellish states of continual suffering. Those who have committed just one treacherous deed will spend one eon in some hellish state of continual suffering as recompense. Those who have committed all five of them may receive five types of recompense within a single eon or they may receive them one after the other.

An ancient worthy once said, "It says in the *Āgama Scriptures* and in the *Great Scripture on the Buddha's Parinirvana* alike that such a one resides for an eon in various types of fire." Furthermore, these Scriptures also state that the suffering varies according to the seriousness of their treacherous deeds. Now, Devadatta committed three treacherous acts, one after the other, and therefore will have three times the suffering which a wicked person receives from committing just one treacherous act. But Devadatta, upon reaching the end of his life, recited the word 'homage', which gave his wicked heart a bit of relief. Regretfully, he died before he could complete the phrase 'Homage to the Buddha'. Though he had fallen into the state of continual suffering, Devadatta continued to take refuge in Shakyamuni Buddha, even though He was far away, and was thus able to resume doing good deeds.

There were four other monks similar to Devadatta who had fallen into a hellish state of continual suffering. A monk named Kokālika was one among the thousand from the Shakya clan who left home life behind to become monks. When Devadatta and Kokālika were going out the city gate, the horse that they were riding suddenly stumbled, and the two fell off, their hats falling off as well. All those who saw this at the time said, "These two will not receive the benefits from the Buddha's Teaching." This monk Kokālika was also called Gukari. During his lifetime he slandered Shariputra and Moggallana, accusing them of committing acts that warranted expulsion from the Sangha. Although the World-honored One tried at the time to dissuade him, Kokālika did not stop, and even Lord Brahma came down to dissuade him, but again he did not stop. Due to his slandering the two venerable monks, he fell into a hellish state in his next lifetime. Even now, he is not provided with the conditions for developing good spiritual roots.

When the monk who had attained the fourth meditative state reached the end of his life, he fell into a hellish state of continual suffering for having slandered the Buddha, even though he died in the intermediate world associated with the fourth

meditative state.[7] Such a condition is called ‘retribution experienced in one’s next life’.

二

We characterize the effects of the five most treacherous deeds as being without interruption, and for five reasons:

First, because the effects that such deeds produce occur immediately. That is, no sooner has such a wicked one performed such a deed than he immediately falls into a hellish state without experiencing any intervening state.

Second, because the suffering that this person experiences from these effects is continual. For any of these five most treacherous acts, the wicked one falls into the Avichi Hell and, within the temporal space of a single immeasurable eon, experiences suffering that constantly streams on without the least moment of relief. Thus, we describe such an effect as being without interruption in accord with the suffering that it produces.

Third, because the length of time during which any being is in this hellish state is not set and is beyond our ability to calculate. Hence, we speak of the effects of these five most treacherous deeds as being incessant because one who commits any of them will fall into the Avichi Hell and, within a single span of time, will experience suffering that streams on indefinitely without the least moment of relief.

Fourth, because the span of that wicked one’s life while in the Avichi Hell is equally unlimited and beyond our ability to calculate. When someone falls into the Avichi Hell due to any of these five treacherous deeds, that person remains fully awake for an immeasurable eon, knowing no diminishing of suffering. Thus, we describe this hellish state as being without interruption in accord with the effects that it produces.

Fifth, because while in the Avichi Hell, one’s very existence appears to be unlimited and immeasurable, filling the hell completely. This hell is eighty-four thousand yojanas* in length and breadth.

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7. The story of this monk is the subject of Discourse 91: On the Monk in the Fourth Meditative State (*Shizen Biku*). The intermediate world refers to the period after death and before rebirth.

> When someone enters that hell, his existence completely fills the space and then, when any other person comes to enter it, that person's existence also completely fills the space, and without the two obstructing each other.[8]
>
> Thus, we speak of the effects of the five most treacherous deeds as being without interruption in accord with the effects these deeds produce.

> In the third temporal period, the retribution is experienced in some future lifetime. That is to say, when we promote or entertain karmic deeds in this lifetime and then, according to the seeds we have sown, fall into a hellish state in our third or fourth lifetime, or even hundreds of thousands of eons beyond, we call this 'retribution experienced in some future lifetime'.

In other words, there are those in this lifetime who have done good deeds and those who have done evil deeds. Even if they have ceased perpetuating such deeds, they will experience their good or evil karma in their third life, or their fourth life, or even after a hundred thousand future lives. This is what we call 'the retribution experienced in some later future lifetime'. Most of a bodhisattva's merit is the retribution that he or she experiences in a future lifetime from deeds accumulated over three asamkhyeya eons.[9] Not knowing such an underlying principle, trainees entertain ever so many doubts, like the Venerable Shayata in the opening story did whilst he was still in home life. Had he not met the Venerable Kumorata, he would have had a difficult time clarifying his doubts.

When a trainee's thinking is good, his evil thoughts disappear, and when his thinking is evil, his good thoughts immediately disappear.

> Long ago in the country of Shravasti there lived two men. One was always doing what was good and the other was always doing what was evil. The trainee who was always doing what was good was

8. That is, for any person in the Avichi Hell, nothing other than that hellish state seems to exist.

9. An asamkhyeya eon is a period of time that is experienced as being interminably long. A bodhisattva experiences these endless-seeming stretches of time just before entering Buddhahood.

> always practicing good deeds with his whole being, never entertaining what was harmful. The trainee who invited evil was always doing bad things with his whole being, never practicing what was good.
>
> When the one practicing good deeds approached the end of his life, a hellish intermediate world appeared before him, due to the strength of evil karma from several lifetimes earlier. Thereupon, he thought, "In my whole life I have always practiced good deeds and have never entertained evil. Surely, I should have been reborn in some celestial world. What conditions have caused this hellish intermediate world to appear before me?" Then the thought arose, "I must surely be receiving some bad karma from earlier lifetimes which has now become ripe, and therefore this hellish intermediate world has appeared." He then remembered the good karma from his practice throughout his present lifetime, and a profound joy arose in him.
>
> Due to the thoughts of his good deeds appearing before him, the hellish intermediate world disappeared and a celestial intermediate world suddenly appeared in its place. After this, when his life had completely ended, he was reborn in a celestial world.

This person who was always doing good not only thought, "This body of mine is, no doubt, receiving retribution from wicked deeds done in several past lifetimes," but he also had a further thought, "For the good that I have practiced throughout my life, I shall surely receive recompense in the future." This was why he was so deeply filled with joy. Because these thoughts of his were true, the hellish intermediate state disappeared and a celestial intermediate state immediately appeared before his eyes, and when his life completely ended, he was reborn in a celestial world. If this person had been a wicked one, and at the end of his life a hellish intermediate world appeared before his eyes, he might well have thought, "My practice of good throughout my whole life has brought me no merit. If good and bad karma exist, how come I am seeing a hellish intermediate world?" At this moment, he would be denying cause and effect, and would be slandering the Three Treasures. Should he be like this, then when he reached the end of his life, he would fall into some hellish state. Because this person was not like this, he was reborn in a celestial world. You need to grasp this fundamental principle and be clear about it.

> When a trainee who does wicked things reaches the end of his life, he may unexpectedly see before his eyes a celestial intermediate world of existence, due to the strength of his good deeds in former past lives. He may then think, "Throughout my life I have always

> done wicked practices and failed to ever practice what is good. By all rights, I should be reborn in some hell. What circumstances could there possibly have been that this intermediate world has appeared before my very eyes?"
>
> Thus, a false view has arisen, and he denies the existence of good and evil, as well as the fruition of much earlier good seeds, because he had sown only harmful seeds in his present life. Hence, when his life came to an end, he was reborn in some hellish world.

As long as he lived, this person had consistently committed evil acts, and further, he had not practiced even one good deed. Not only that, when his life came to an end, he saw before his very eyes a celestial intermediate world, but he did not know about recompense from distant former lives. Thus, he thought, "During my whole life I committed evil acts, but I am about to be reborn in a celestial world. It is clear to me that good and evil karma have never existed." Because of the strength of his false views, he denied the existence of good and evil karma in this way, so that the celestial intermediate world that appeared fell away and a hellish intermediate world quickly appeared before him and, ending his life, he fell into some hell. It was due to this false view of his that the celestial intermediate world disappeared. So, you trainees, by all means do not hold to false views! Learn which views are false and which are true until your bodily life has exhausted itself.

First off, to deny causality, to slander Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and to deny both the three temporal worlds and liberation from them are all false views. You need to keep in mind that, in this lifetime, you will not have two or three bodies. Were you to vainly fall into false views and experience evil karma to no avail, how regrettable that would be! When someone, while engaged in some evil act, thinks that it is not evil simply because they hold to the erroneous belief that such an act does not produce retribution for wrongdoing, this does not mean that this person will not experience recompense for their evil deeds. According to their wrongful thinking, the recompense for good that comes may turn around and come back at them as recompense for evil.

二

> The Imperial Chaplain Kōgetsu once asked the venerable monk Chōsa Keishin, "An ancient worthy once said, 'After we have fully understood, we see that our karmic hindrances have been empty all along. When we have not yet fully understood, then we must, by all means, pay off all our old debts.' So, how were those like the

Venerable Shishibodai and our great Master Eka, the Second Chinese Ancestor, able to pay off all their old debts?"[10]

Chōsa replied, "O my virtuous one, you have not yet experienced their being empty all along."

Kōgetsu then asked, "What, pray, is this 'being empty all along?'"

Chōsa responded, "It is what karmic hindrances are."

Kōgetsu then asked, "Just what are karmic hindrances?"

Chōsa replied, "What has been empty all along."

Kōgetsu was at a loss for words. Chōsa then gave him the following poem:

What conditionally exists, from the first, is not
That which truly exists,
And the disappearance of the conditioned is not
a case of there being nothing.
The meaning of "Nirvana is the paying off of
old debts"
Is that our one True Nature is free from the
discriminatory.

Chōsa Keishin was Meditation Master Nansen Fugan's foremost disciple. He had a reputation for having explored the Matter* with his Master over a long period of time. Be that as it may, in the present story he was not able to fully grasp the fundamental principle. For instance, he did not understand what Yōka Genkaku was talking about,[11] nor had he clarified what Kumorata's compassionate instructions to Shayata were. Far and away, it was as if he had not encountered even in his dreams what had been voiced by the World-honored One. Since all that the Buddhas and Ancestors have been expressing had not been Transmitted to you, Chōsa, who could esteem and respect you?

There are three type of spiritual hindrances: karmic hindrances (which arise from our deliberate deeds), compensatory hindrances (which arise as recompense for our past deeds), and defiling hindrances (which arise from our pursuit of our passions). What we call the 'five most treacherous deeds' are an example of karmic

10. Shishibodai and Taiso Eka were both executed and were, therefore, unable to complete their full natural life span.

11. An allusion to Genkaku's famous poem, "The Song that Attests to the Way". One translation of this is found in *Buddhist Writings on Meditation and Daily Practice,* (Shasta Abbey Press, 1994), pp. 223-241.

hindrances. Although this was not at the heart of what Kōgetsu was asking, what he was saying concerning the past was based on the assumption that karma never disappears but tends to arise as karma from some distant past life. Your error, Chōsa, was that when you were asked, "What, pray, does 'being empty all along' mean?" you responded that it refers to karmic hindrances. But how could 'karmic hindrance' mean 'something that has been empty all along'? Since karmic hindrances are something created by our actions, how can something we have created be 'empty all along'? 'Created' and 'non-created' exist only in relation to each other. If we did not create them, they would not be karmic hindrances, and if they are something that is created, they would not be something that has been empty all along. It is a non-Buddhist view that karmic hindrances are empty when their true nature has not yet been stirred up. If, as you say, karmic hindrances are 'empty all along', then human beings who indulge in creating karma would have no chance of liberating themselves. If they had no way of liberating themselves, then Buddhas could not have come forth in the world. If Buddhas had not come forth in the world, then our Ancestral Master Bodhidharma could not have come from the West. If our Ancestral Master had not come from the West, there could not have been a Nansen. If there had not been a Nansen, who would you have exchanged the Eyes of training with?

Further, when Kōgetsu asked, "Just what, pray, are karmic hindrances?" you replied, "What has been empty all along." This resembles the old 'tethering the horse' response.[12] Even so, it would appear that, due to your weak abilities, you did not fully understand the Matter and were not the equal of the shrine priest who was long in training. This must have been why you gave rise to silly words like those in this dialogue.

Afterwards, you gave him your poem, with the lines:

> *The meaning of "Nirvana is the paying off of old debts"*
> *Is that our one True Nature is free from the discriminatory.*

As to the one True Nature of which you spoke, just what is that 'True Nature'? Pray, which among the three natures do you consider It to be?[13] Would it be fair to

12. That is, when someone asks, "Who tethered the horse?" the one asked replies, "The owner of the horse," and when then asked, "Who is the owner of the horse?" the one asked replies, "The one who tethered the horse."

13. A reference to the nature of our deliberate acts. That is, they are good, bad, or neutral.

say that you do not know that 'our True Nature' refers to 'nirvana being our having paid off our old debts?' When you speak of nirvana, what is this nirvana of yours? Would it be the nirvana of the shravakas?* Or the nirvana of the pratyekabuddhas?* Or the nirvana of the Buddha? No matter which, yours cannot equal the meaning of 'paying off old debts'. What you are expressing is not what the Buddhas and Ancestors expressed. Further, you need to buy some straw sandals and go off hunting for a true Master. Those like the Venerable Shishibodai and our great Master Eka, the Second Chinese Ancestor, have suffered personal injury for the sake of wicked people. Why would you want to resemble those transgressors who caused such harm? This is not your final body, nor is it a body that will not have an intermediate world, so why would you not experience retribution in some future lifetime? If the time is already ripe for you to receive recompense in the future, it will not be something for you to doubt now. Obviously, you need to recognize that Chōsa had not yet clarified what the effects of karma in the three temporal worlds are.

Those who are truly serious in their training must clarify what the effects of karma in the three temporal periods are. Then they will undoubtedly be like the Venerable Kumorata. This is already the activity of those in our Ancestral tradition, so it should not be discarded or neglected. Besides that, you need to explore extensively through your training all eight kinds of karma, which includes such things as temporally unfixed karma.[14] Those who have not yet understood karmic retribution cannot have received the genuine Transmission of the Buddhas and Ancestors. Those who are not yet clear about the principle of karmic retribution in the three temporal periods should not go about recklessly calling themselves teachers and spiritual guides for ordinary people and those in lofty positions.

II

> The World-honored One once said: "Even were hundreds of thousands of eons to pass, the karmic consequences from what we have created do not disappear. When dealing with causes and conditions, we naturally receive the fruits therefrom as karmic recompense. By all means, you should all know that if your moral acts are completely impure, you will get completely impure results when the recompense from this matures. And if your moral acts are

14. The eight kinds of karma are good karma that acts within each of the three temporal periods, plus good karma that is not limited to just one of these periods, and misfortunate karma within each of these three periods, plus unlimited misfortunate karma.

> completely pure, you will get completely pure results when the recompense from this matures. And if your moral acts are a mix of impure and pure, you will get mixed results when the recompense from this matures. Therefore, by all means, you should avoid acts that are completely impure or a mix of impure and pure. You should make every effort to explore through your training with your Master what completely pure deeds are."
>
> Then, having heard what the Buddha voiced, all in the great assembly rejoiced and received it in trust.

As the World-honored One has taught, when the members of the assembly have ceased to create mixed good and bad karma, even were hundreds of thousands of myriad eons to pass, they will not let our practice die out. Whenever any of them encounter causality, invariably they immediately become aware of it. Thus, when we feel remorse for our evil deeds and, in repentance, bring them to a halt, that will alter our heavy misdeeds, causing us to receive lighter consequences. If we take joy in good deeds—be they one's own or another's—we will want to increase them more and more, which is what I mean by 'not letting the practice die out'. And there is, indeed, recompense for that!

Copied on the ninth day of the third lunar month in the fifth year of the Kenchō era (March 8, 1253) whilst in the Chief Junior's quarters at Eihei-ji Temple.

Ejō

90

On 'The Four Horses'

(Shime)

Translator's introduction: This discourse is based on a widely quoted description of four kinds of trainees when they encounter the Buddhist Teaching on impermanence. The training of the four kinds is likened to the training of four types of horses.

> One day a non-Buddhist came to where the Buddha was in order to pay the World-honored One a visit. He said to the Buddha, "I do not ask You whether You have words for It, nor do I ask You whether there are no words for It."
>
> The World-honored One sat in silence for some good while.
>
> Thereupon, the non-Buddhist humbly bowed and, in praise, said, "How fine, O World-honored One! Your great benevolence and great compassion have parted the clouds of my delusion and made it possible for me to enter the Truth." He then made a prostration and departed.
>
> After the non-Buddhist had departed, Ananda then asked the Buddha, "What did the non-Buddhist realize that led him to say that he had entered the Truth and then, after praising You, depart?"
>
> The World-honored One replied, "He was like a good horse who just goes forth upon seeing but the shadow of a riding crop."

Since the time when our Ancestral Master Bodhidharma came from the West up to the present, there have been many good Masters who have taken up this account and given it to those training under them. Among the trainees, there were those who took years and others who took months or even just days before they clarified the Matter* and came to trust in the Buddha's Dharma. We call this the account of the non-Buddhist who asked for the Buddha's explanation of the Matter. You need to realize that the World-honored One had two sorts of explanation: by spiritual silence and by spiritual explanation. Those who are able to enter the Truth via this narrative are all like a good horse who sees the shadow of the riding crop and

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* See *Glossary.*

gallops forth. Those who are able to enter the Truth via a way of explaining the Matter that goes beyond spiritual silence and spiritual explanation are also like this.

❀

Our Ancestral Teacher Nāgārjuna once said the following, "When I explain some phrase from a Scripture for the benefit of someone, it is as if that person were a swift horse who has seen the shadow of a riding crop and takes to the appropriate path." On any occasion whatsoever, whether when listening to Teaching on that which arises and That which does not arise, or listening to Teaching on the Three Vehicles* and the One Vehicle, there are often those who gallop off on a false path, but just as often there are those who can see the shadow of the riding crop and thereby take to the genuine Path. If you encounter such a person in your pursuit of a Master, there will be no place where he or she does not express some Scriptural phrase for your benefit, nor will there be any time when you can say that the shadow of the riding crop is not to be seen. Those who see the shadow of the riding crop immediately upon sitting in meditation, those who see the shadow of the riding crop after three immeasurably long eons, and those who see the shadow of the riding crop after innumerable eons of eons are all capable of entering the genuine Path.

❀

In one of the *Āgama Scriptures*, there is the following passage:

> The Buddha once told his monks that there were four kinds of horses. The first, upon seeing the shadow of the riding crop, is startled and forthwith follows the wish of its rider. The second, startled when the crop touches its hair, forthwith follows the wish of its rider. The third is startled after the crop touches its flesh. The fourth is awakened only after the touch of the riding crop is felt in its bones.
>
> The first horse is like the person who hears about the death of someone in a distant monastic community and forthwith feels aversion for things of the world. The next horse is like the person who hears of the death of someone within their own monastic community and then feels aversion for things of the world. The third horse is like the person who hears of the death of someone near and dear to them and then feels aversion for things of the world. The fourth horse is like the person whose own body experiences sickness and suffering, and only then feels aversion for things of the world.

This is the metaphor of the four horses in the *Āgama Scriptures*. When you are exploring through your training what the Buddha's Dharma is, this is certainly a good place to study. Those among ordinary people or those in lofty stations who emerge as spiritually good friends and guides, later, as emissaries of the Buddha, become Ancestral Masters. All of them have invariably explored this Teaching through their practice and pass it on for the benefit of their disciples. Those who do not know it are not spiritually good friends and guides for ordinary people or for those more lofty. Those human disciples who have grown good, thick roots and are intimate with the Buddha's words and ways have invariably been able to hear this Teaching. Those who are ever so far from the Buddha's words and ways have not heard it, nor do they know it. Hence, those who would be master teachers should consider presenting it without delay, and disciples should pray that they may hear of it without delay.

The meaning of 'feeling aversion for things of the world' has been given in the *Vimalakirti Scripture*, as follows:

> When the Buddha gives voice to a single utterance of Dharma, sentient beings are able to free themselves from suffering in accord with their type. Some will experience fear, some will feel joy, some will give rise to aversion for things of the world, some will cut through their doubts.

❀

The *Great Scripture on the Buddha's Parinirvana* quotes the Buddha as saying the following:

> Next, my good disciples, it is like training horses. Generally speaking, there are four kinds of horses. With the first, contact is made through their hair. With the second, contact is made through their skin. With the third, contact is made through their flesh. With the fourth, contact is made through their bones. They obey the trainer's wish, depending on which part is contacted.
>
> The situation is also like this for the Tathagata. By means of four methods, He restrains and subdues sentient beings. With the first, the Buddha explains for their benefit what 'being alive' means, whereby they accept what He says. They are like horses who follow the wish of their rider once he has made contact with their hair. With the second, the Buddha explains what 'being alive, along with aging' means, whereby they accept what He says. They are like horses who follow the wish of their rider once he has made contact with their hair

> and skin. With the third, the Buddha explains what 'being alive, along with aging and sickening' means, whereby they accept what He says. They are like horses who follow the wish of their rider once he has made contact with their hair, skin, and flesh. With the fourth, He explains what 'being alive, along with aging, sickening, and dying' means, whereby they accept what the Buddha says. They are like horses who follow the wish of their rider once he has made contact with their hair, skin, flesh, and bones.
>
> O my good disciples, there is nothing assured when it comes to a rider training a horse, but with the World-honored Tathagata's restraining and subduing sentient beings, His efforts are assured and never in vain. This is why the Buddha was given the epithet of Tamer and Subduer of Those Who Are Strong in Their Determination.

This is called "The Four Horses of the *Great Scripture on the Buddha's Parinirvana*". There are no trainees who have failed to learn of it and no Buddhas who have failed to teach it. We hear it when we follow the Buddha. Of necessity, we pay heed to it whenever we encounter and offer our service to a Buddha. Once we have had the Buddha Dharma Transmitted to us, we continually give expression to It for the sake of sentient beings. When we ultimately arrive at Buddhahood, we voice It for the sake of the great assembly of bodhisattvas* and all others—worldly and celestial—who will listen, just as if it were the first time that our wish to realize the Truth had arisen. This is why the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha have continued on without interruption.

Because this is the way things are, what Buddhas teach is far from what bodhisattvas teach. You need to keep in mind that, generally speaking, there are these four methods of a trainer of horses, namely, making contact with the hair, making contact with the skin, making contact with the flesh, and making contact with the bones. It may not be apparent what the object is that makes contact with the hair, but in the opinion of virtuous bodhisattva-mahasattvas* who Transmit the Dharma, it might be a whip.[1] At the same time, among the methods for training a horse, there are those who may employ a whip and those who do not employ a whip, since the training of horses may not invariably require a whip.

1. The word *ben* translates both as 'riding crop' and 'whip'. In neither case is its use viewed as an instrument of punishment in Buddhist training. Rather, it may be considered as an instrument for getting someone's attention or pointing the way.

Horses that stand eight feet high are called dragon horses. There are few humans who are prepared to train such horses. There are also horses called thousand-league horses, since they can run a thousand leagues in one day. When running five hundred leagues, these horses are said to sweat blood, but after five hundred leagues, they speedily run on, refreshed. Those who ride these horses are few, as are those who know how to train them. There are no such horses in China, but there are some in other lands. It seems that one does not often need to apply a whip to these horses. Even so, an old worthy once said, "In training horses, one invariably applies a whip. Without a whip, a horse is not trained, for this is the method for training a horse."

Now, there are the four methods of contacting the hair, the skin, the flesh, and the bones. To contact the skin while leaving the hair untouched is not possible, nor can one contact the flesh and the bones without touching the hair and the skin. This is how we know that one needs to add the whip. That this has not been explained here is due to something lacking in the old worthy's statement.[2] There are many places like this in Scriptural writings.

The World-honored Tathagata, Tamer and Subduer of Those Who Are Strong in Their Determination, was also like such a horse trainer. He subdued and restrained all sentient beings by means of these four methods, assuredly and never in vain. That is to say, there were those who accepted His words when He explained for their benefit what 'being alive' means. And there were those who accepted His words when He explained what 'being alive and aging' means. And there were those who accepted His words when He explained what 'being alive, aging, and sickening' means. And there were those who accepted His words when He explained what 'being alive, aging, sickening, and dying' means. Those who learn of the last three cannot avoid the first one. It is just as in training horses in the world: there is no contacting skin, flesh, or bones apart from contacting hair. Explaining for the sake of others what 'being alive, aging, sickening, and dying' means that it was He, the World-honored Tathagata, who taught the meaning of 'being alive, aging, sickening, and dying'. He did not do so in order to help people to cut themselves off from being alive, aging, sickening, and dying. Nor did He teach that being alive, aging, sickening, and dying is what Truth is. Nor did He teach this in order to get people to understand that being alive, aging, sickening, and dying are what Truth is. He taught this 'being alive, aging, sickening, and dying' for the sake of others in order to put before all sentient beings the Truth of

2. In the original Chinese text of what the old worthy said, the word 'whip' does not occur. Dōgen's Japanese paraphrase is unclear as to whether he is referring to a whip or a riding crop.

supreme, fully perfected enlightenment. Thus, the success of the World-honored Tathagata's efforts to restrain and subdue sentient beings are assured and never in vain. This is why He is called the Awakened One, Tamer and Subduer of Those Who Are Strong in Their Determination.

On a day during the summer retreat in the seventh year of the Kenchō era (1255), I finished copying and proofing this from the Master's draft.

Ejō

91

On the Monk in the Fourth Meditative State

(Shizen Biku)

Translator's Introduction: In the first part of this discourse, Dōgen quotes a cautionary tale concerning a monk who misunderstood what he was experiencing in his meditation and thought that he had realized arhathood, whereas he had simply realized a state of meditative equanimity associated with the removing of delusions from within the world of form.

In the second part of this discourse, Dōgen takes up 'The Tripod Theory', a view that was popular in China at the time. It held that Chinese culture was based on the teachings of Lao-tzu, Confucius, and Shakyamuni, the respective founders of Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism, and that, just as a tripod needs all three of its legs in order to remain upright, so too the Chinese needed all three of these teachings in order to maintain their culture. The underlying premise for this view was that these three represented three essential ways of stating the same fundamental teaching. In refutation of this theory, Dōgen points out that Buddhism does not need Taoism or Confucianism to justify Its existence in China or anywhere else and that, in addition, the Buddha Dharma is not the same as the teachings of Confucius and Lao-tzu.

Our Fourteenth Indian Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna once said the following:

> There was once a certain monk among the Buddha's disciples who, upon experiencing the fourth meditative state, became filled with conceit, fancying that he had attained the fourth stage of arhathood. Previously, upon experiencing the first meditative state, he straightaway imagined that he had attained the first stage of arhathood, that of being a stream-entrant.[1] When he experienced the second meditative state, he imagined that he had attained the second stage of arhathood, that of a once-returner.[2] When he experienced the third meditative state, he imagined that he had attained the third stage of arhathood, that of a non-returner.[3] When he experienced the fourth

1. That is, one who has understood the Truth of the Buddha's Teachings and, as a result of following those Teachings, will be subject to no more than seven rebirths in the future.
2. That is, one who will be reborn but one more time.
3. That is, one who will not be reborn into the world of desire again.

meditative state, he imagined that he had attained the fourth stage of arhathood, that of a full arhat.[4] Confident of this, he became proud of himself and did not seek to advance any farther in his training.

When his life was just about to end, he saw rising before him what appeared to be an intermediate world, one associated with the fourth meditative state.[5] Thereupon he gave rise to a mistaken notion, thinking, "There is no nirvana. The Buddha has deceived me." Because of his unrepentant mistaken view, the intermediate world of the fourth meditative state disappeared and a hellish intermediate world arose. Then, upon his death, he was reborn into a hellish world of incessant suffering.

The monks asked the Buddha, "At the end of this mistaken monk's life, where was he reborn?"

The Buddha replied, "That person was reborn in a hellish world of incessant suffering."

The monks were greatly dismayed, "Can doing meditation and keeping to the Precepts lead to that?"

The Buddha answered as before and then added, "This was all due to his being filled with conceit. When he experienced the fourth meditative state, he fancied that he had attained the fourth stage of arhathood. Facing the end of his life, he saw the appearance of the intermediate world of the fourth meditative state, and then gave rise to a mistaken view, thinking, 'There is no nirvana. Now even though I am an arhat, I am to be reborn. The Buddha has deceived me.' Because of this, he saw the appearance of a hellish intermediate world and, after his passing, he was reborn into that hellish world." The Buddha then composed the following verse:

Though hearing much, holding to the Precepts, and doing meditation,
He had not yet acquired the method for bringing his excesses to an end.
Though he had the merit from his actions,
It was hard for him to have faith in this matter.

4. That is, one who has cleansed his or her heart of all greed, hatred and delusion and will not be reborn into any of the six worlds of existence again.

5. The intermediate world refers to the period between death and rebirth.

It was for his slandering Buddha that he fell into a hell,
Which was in no way connected with the fourth great meditative state.

This monk is known as 'the monk in the fourth meditative state', as well as 'the monk who did not give ear to the Teaching'. We are being cautioned about mistaking the fourth meditative state for the fourth stage of arhathood, as well as being cautioned about harboring false views that slander the Buddha. All the people in His great assembly, whether ordinary people or those in lofty positions, knew about this event. From the time when the Tathagata was in the world up to this very day, both those in India and those in China, have ridiculed mistaken views in order to caution someone against being attached to what is wrong, saying, "That is like realizing the fourth meditative state and taking it to be the fourth stage of arhathood."

Let me summarize for you three ways in which this monk was mistaken.[6] In the first place, he was someone who did not give ear to the Teaching and therefore was not up to distinguishing between the fourth meditative state and the fourth stage of arhathood. And he vainly kept his distance from the Buddha as well as idly living off by himself. He was fortunate enough to live at a time when the Tathagata was in the world. Had he continually paid visits to where the Buddha was, regularly encountering Him and listening to His Teaching, he would not have made the mistakes that he did. Nevertheless, because he lived off by himself like a hermit and did not go to places where the Buddha was in order to hear His Teaching, he was the way he was. Even though he failed to go where the Buddha was, he could have gone to where the great arhats were and received instruction from them. To live alone to no good purpose is a mistake born of conceit.

In the second place, to attain the first meditative state and think it to be the first stage of arhathood, then to attain the second meditative state and think it to be the second stage of arhathood, then to attain the third meditative state and think it to be the third stage of arhathood, then to attain the fourth meditative state and think it to be the fourth stage of arhathood, this was his second mistake. How could he possibly have compared the way the first, second, third, and fourth meditative states appear with the way the first, second, third, and fourth stages of arhathood appear? This was due to the fault of his not giving ear to the Teaching, a fault derived from his not taking refuge in his Master and thereby remaining in the dark.

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6. The first two ways are given in this paragraph and the following one. The third way is not given until later in the discourse.

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Among the disciples of Ubakikuta, there was a certain monk who, in all good faith, had left home life behind, and upon realizing the fourth meditative state, took it to be the fourth stage of arhathood. Ubakikuta, using his skillful means, had him go live in some distant place. He then made a band of thieves, along with five hundred merchants, materialize upon the monk's path. The thieves threatened to slaughter the merchants. The monk, seeing this, feared for his life, but then it suddenly occurred to him, "I am surely not an arhat. I must just be at the third stage of arhathood."[7]

After all the merchants had fled, only the daughter of a wealthy merchant remained behind. She asked the monk, "All I pray for is that, out of your great virtue, you will let me come with you." The monk replied, "The Buddha does not permit us to travel with a woman." The young girl said, "Be that as it may, I will just follow behind you, my virtuous monk." Taking pity on her, the monk went forth, fulfilling the wishes of both by maintaining a proper distance between them.

The Venerable Ubakikuta then caused a great river to appear. The young woman said, "O great virtuous one, will you cross this with me?" The monk was downstream and the young woman was upstream when the woman fell into the water. "O great virtuous one, save me!" she cried. Then, as the monk reached out his hands to pull her from the river, thoughts of how soft she felt welled up in him, by which he knew that he was not a non-returner. Feeling intense craving for her, he picked her up and took her to a secluded place, desiring to have intercourse with her, when he saw that she was actually his Master. Giving rise to deep shame, he stood with his head hanging low.

The Venerable One then instructed him, saying, "For a long time you have fancied yourself to be an arhat, so how could you possibly want to commit such an act?" Leading the monk back to the community, He had him express his remorse to them, and explained to

7. The fourth stage is marked by equanimity, which the monk realized that he lacked due to his feelings of fear.

> him the essence of the Dharma, thereby causing him to truly attain arhathood.[8]

Although this monk's mistake in the first place was having an inflated view of himself, more specifically, when he witnessed the threat of a massacre, he gave way to fear. At the time he thought, "I am not a full arhat," still he made the mistake of thinking that he must be in the third stage of arhathood. Later, when he gave rise to thoughts of how soft the woman felt, thereby allowing carnal desires to well up, he knew that he was not a non-returner. Moreover, unlike the monk in the fourth meditative state, he did not give rise to thoughts that slandered the Buddha, nor to thoughts that slandered the Dharma, nor to thoughts that violated the Scriptures. Because this monk had the strength from having formally studied the sacred Teachings, he realized that he himself was not an arhat or even a non-returner. People today who do not give ear to the Teaching do not know what an arhat is, much less what a Buddha is, so they do not know that they themselves are not yet an arhat or a Buddha; they just recklessly go around thinking, "I am Buddha," which is an enormous mistake. Their's must be a deep-seated fault. Students of the Way must, by all means, learn first off just what a Buddha is.

A virtuous one of old once said, "Those who study the saintly Scriptures know, for the most part, what follows upon what, so, should they go beyond the proper bounds, their fault is easily recognized and corrected." How true are these words of that virtuous one of old! Though people give rise to personal opinions, if they have studiously learned even a little bit of the Buddha's Teachings, they will not be deceived by themselves or be deluded by others.

> There was once a man—or so have I heard—who thought he had realized Buddhahood, but as he waited, the light of dawn did not emblazon the sky, as he had anticipated, so he thought it must be due to an obstruction by Mara. When the dawn finally came to full daylight, he did not encounter Brahma encouraging him to give voice to the Dharma. So, he knew he was not a Buddha, and thus he reckoned he was an arhat. But when others reviled him over this, his mind gave rise to negative thinking, so he knew that he was not an arhat. Thus, he imagined that he was at the third stage of arhathood.

8. This quote comes from a commentary on a text written by Master Tendai Chigi, the founder of the Tendai tradition.

> And then, when he encountered certain women, he gave rise to lascivious thoughts, thereby knowing that he was not a saintly person.

Here too was one who truly knew the forms of the Teaching and therefore was not different from the person in the previous story.

Now, those who know the Buddha Dharma recognize their mistakes all on their own. Those who are ignorant of their mistakes vainly stay in their befuddled state of mind for the whole of their lives. And it may be like this for them in life after life. Even though that disciple of Ubakikuta's had attained the fourth meditative state and took it for the fourth stage of arhathood, he was wise enough to know that he was not an arhat. Even with the monk who did not give ear to the Teaching, if upon seeing an intermediate world of the fourth meditative state at the end of his life, he had realized that he was not an arhat, he would not have committed the wrong of slandering the Buddha. And what's more, it had been a long time since he had realized the fourth meditative state, so why did he not realize upon reflection that it could not be the fourth stage of arhathood? And if he already knew that it was not the fourth stage of arhathood, why did he not correct his thinking? Instead, he idly stuck to his mistaken view, drowning in his false opinion of himself.

In the third place, as his life came to an end, he made a huge mistake. The fault was so profound that he ultimately fell into a hellish state of incessant suffering. I want to say to him, "Even if, during your whole lifetime, you were convinced that you had come to the fourth stage of arhathood, and then, at the end of your life an intermediate world of the fourth meditative state appeared, you should have acknowledged your lifelong error, realizing that you were never at the fourth stage of arhathood. How could you possibly harbor the thought, 'The Buddha has deceived me. Even though there is no nirvana, He has invented one?' This was a fault due to your not giving ear to the Teaching. This wrongful way slanders the Buddha. Accordingly, when the intermediate state of a hellish world appeared, you ended your life by falling into a hell of incessant suffering. How could anyone possibly be the equal of a Tathagata, even a saintly one of the fourth stage of arhathood?"

Shariputra had long been a saintly person at the fourth stage of arhathood. Were we to gather up all the spiritually wise discernment that exists in the three-thousand great-thousandfold world and, after excluding that of the Tathagata, treat what remained as one tenth, and then compare a sixteenth of Shariputra's wise discernment with that wise discernment that remained in the three-thousand great-thousandfold world, it would not equal one tenth of that sixteenth that Shariputra had. Even so, upon hearing the Tathagata give voice to Teaching that he had never

heard before, Shariputra did not think, "What the Buddha is now saying is different from what He said earlier. Surely, He is deceiving me." Rather he says in praise of the Tathagata, "Mara the Tempter has nothing like this to offer!" The Tathagata once ferried a rich man to the Other Shore, one whom Shariputra would not ferry to the Other Shore: this is clearly the difference between Shariputra's having only realized the fourth stage of arhathood, whereas the Tathagata had realized Buddhahood.[9]

If the universe in all ten quarters were filled with folks like Shariputra and his disciples and they all together tried to fully fathom the Buddha's wise discernment, they could not succeed. And Confucius and Lao-tzu never had such meritorious virtue. Who among those who have pursued a study of the Buddha Dharma would be unable to fathom the teachings of Confucius or Lao-tzu?[10] But among those who have devoted themselves to a study of Confucius or Lao-tzu, have any ever been able to fathom what the Buddha Dharma is? Nowadays, folks in Sung China, by and large, hold to the notion that the teachings of Confucius and Lao-tzu are in agreement with the Buddha's Dharma. Theirs is a most profoundly distorted view, one we shall explore by and by.

When the monk in the fourth state of meditation took his distorted view as being true, he fancied that the Tathagata had deceived him, and turned his back on the Buddha for ever so long. The enormity of his folly was the equal of such persons as the six non-Buddhist teachers.[11]

A virtuous one of old once said: "Even when our Great Master was in the world, there were people with fallacious views and personal opinions. And what is worse, after His passing, there have been those who have been unable to experience meditative states for want of a Master." The Great Master referred to here is the World-honored Buddha. In truth, even those who had left home life behind and received ordination when the World-honored One was in the world

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9. An allusion to a wealthy man who, at the age of one hundred, resolved to be a monk. Shariputra did not allow him to enter the assembly because of his age. The Buddha, hearing of this, did permit him to become a monk, which ultimately led him to realize Buddhahood.

10. A thorough knowledge of the works attributed to Confucius, Lao-tzu, and, later, Chuang-tzu was considered essential for any educated Chinese male, and this continued for over twenty-five hundred years, until their writings were replaced by Mao's *Little Red Book.*

11. They lived at the time of the Buddha and are identified in Pali Scriptures as Purana Kassapa (an amoralist who denied that good and evil exist), Makkari Gosala (a fatalist), Sanjati Belattiputta (a skeptic), Ajita Kesakambara (a materialist), Pakudha Kaccayana (who explained the universe in terms of seven elemental factors), and Nigantha Nataputta (Founder of Jainism, who believed in the relativity of all things).

found it difficult to avoid having mistaken views and personal opinions, due to their not giving ear to His Teaching. How much less can we avoid mistakes, we who live in a remote land during the last five hundred year period following the demise of the Tathagata![12] Even someone who has given rise to the fourth meditative state is like this. How much less worthy of mention are those who have not even reached the fourth meditative state and vainly drown in their craving for fame and their greed for gain, that bunch who yearn for official careers and worldly pursuits! Today in Great Sung China there are many ill-informed and silly people, who say, "The teachings of Lao-tzu and Confucius are in accord with what the Buddha Taught, so their paths are not divergent."

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In Great Sung China during the Chia-tai era (1201-1205), there was a monk named Shōju who presented to the emperor a thirty-fascicle work that he had edited entitled the *Chia-tai Era Record of the Lamp Whose Light Reaches Everywhere.* In it, he said:

> Your humble subject heard the words of Kozan Chi'en who said, "My way is like a tripod, and its three teachings are like its legs. Should the tripod lack one leg, it would tip over." Your humble subject has deeply admired that man for ever so long and has explored his persuasive remarks. Thus I have come to realize that the essence of the teachings of Confucius is sincerity and the essence of the teachings of Taoism resides in a non-judgmental heart. The essence of the Shakya's teaching resides in seeing one's True Nature. 'Sincerity,' 'non-judgmentalism,' and 'seeing one's True Nature' are different in name but the same in substance. When we reach the place that they all ultimately come down to, there is nothing to be understood except this teaching, and so forth…

People who hold such mistaken views and personal opinions are many indeed; they are not limited to Chi'en and Shōju. The error of these folks is more profound than those who have realized the fourth meditative state and think that they have experienced the fourth stage of arhathood, for they are surely slandering Buddha, slandering Dharma, and slandering Sangha. They have already denied liberation, the three temporal worlds, and cause and effect. Beyond doubt, in their jungle of

12. 'The last five hundred years' refers to the third and final five hundred year period when the Dharma will have become so degenerate as to be spiritually ineffective.

entanglements and confusion, they have invited calamity and woe. They are the equals of that bunch who think that there are no Three Treasures, Four Noble Truths, or four types of monks.[13] The essence of the Buddha Dharma has never been simply seeing one's True Nature. Where have any of the Seven Buddhas* or our twenty-eight Indian Ancestors said that the Buddha Dharma is merely the seeing of one's True Nature? The *Platform Scripture* of the Sixth Ancestor contains the phrase, 'seeing one's True Nature', but this text is a fraudulent document, it is not a work associated with the Treasure House of the Dharma, nor is the phrase one of Daikan Enō's sayings, nor is it a text that the descendants of the Buddhas and Ancestors have ever relied on. Because Shōju and Chi'en did not have a clue about even a cubbyhole's worth of the Buddha's Dharma, they manufactured this false concoction of a three-footed tripod.

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A virtuous one of old once said:

> Even Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu were still unaware of the Lesser Course's* possibility of being attached and what it is that gets attached, as well as the possibility of breaking free from attachments and what it is that gets broken free, to say nothing of actually being attached to attachments and actually breaking free from attachments within the Greater Course.* This is why their teaching is not the least bit like the Buddha Dharma. Even so, confused, worldly people who are deluded by names and forms, as well as by dubious meditative practices, have wandered off from the genuine principle. Such people would like to equate such Taoist terms as 'the meritorious function of the Tao' or 'just strolling along',[14] with the teaching of liberation in the Buddha Dharma, but how could such as this possibly be?

From ancient times, people who are confused by names and forms, as well as those who do not know what the genuine principle is, have equated Chuang-tzu and Lao-tzu with the Buddha Dharma. From ancient times, no one who has had even the slightest bit of training within the Buddha Dharma has attached importance to Chuang-tzu or Lao-tzu.

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13. The four types of monks are those who are excellent in the practice, those who expound the Dharma, those who devote their lives to exploring the Dharma, and those who disgrace the Dharma.

* See *Glossary.*

14. The latter term might find a closer equivalent today as 'just going with the flow'.

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It says in the *Scripture on the Immaculate Practice That Accords with the Dharma:*[15] "Those in China call the Bodhisattva* of Moonlight by the name of Yen-hui,[16] the Bodhisattva Whose Light Is Pure by the name of Chung-ni,[17] and Kashyapa Bodhisattva by the name of Lao-tzu." From ancient times, people have cited this teaching, saying, "Confucius and Lao-tzu were bodhisattvas and, as a consequence, what they expressed must fundamentally be the same as what the Buddha expressed." Further, they have said, "They may well have been emissaries of the Buddha, so what they expressed would naturally be what the Buddha expressed." All such assertions are wrong.

A virtuous one of old once made a comment about that text, saying, "In conformity with the catalogues of Scriptural works, all consider this so-called 'scripture' to be spurious." Relying upon this remark of his, we can say that the Buddha's Dharma is all the more divergent from the teachings of Confucius and Lao-tzu. To assert that they are already bodhisattvas does not alter this, for bodhisattvahood cannot be compared to realizing the fruition of Buddhahood. Furthermore, the meritorious action of 'concealing one's light and accommodating oneself to others'[18] is a method used only by Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the three temporal worlds. It is not something that ordinary, secular people can do. How could an ordinary, secular person who is truly keeping to his worldly occupation be free enough to accommodate himself to others? Neither Confucius nor Lao-tzu ever spoke of accommodating themselves for the sake of others. Even less did Confucius and Lao-tzu know about karmic causes from the past or their effects in the present. Their aim was simply to artfully serve their sovereign and govern their households by means of loyalty and filial piety for merely their own single

15. This text (J. *Shōjō Hōgyō Kyō*) has long been considered one of the so-called 'spurious scriptures,' whose teaching is patently false. As a consequence, it is not included in the great collections of Buddhist Scriptures, such as the *Taishō Daizōkyō*.

16. Yen-hui was the chief disciple in Confucius's entourage.

17. Chung-ni was another name for Confucius.

18. 'Concealing one's light and accommodating oneself to others' is a technical Buddhist term. 'Concealing one's light' refers to the ability of Buddhas and bodhisattvas to 'turn down' the brilliance that may naturally shine forth due to the effects of Their spiritual attainments, which may put others into awe and thereby stimulate feelings of inadequacy in them. 'Accommodating oneself to others' refers to the ability of Buddhas and bodhisattvas to assume a presence that does not frighten people. Both abilities are used in order to help ferry beings to the Other Shore.

generation, since they had nothing to teach future generations. They may already have been equals of the nihilists.[19] Those who felt an aversion towards Chuang-tzu and Lao-tzu and said, "They did not even know of the Lesser Course, much less of the Greater Course!" were bright Masters of old. Anyone who says, as Chi'en and Shōju did, that the three teachings are fundamentally one and the same teaching is an ignoramus during this later, degenerate age of ours. O Chi'en and Shōju, I ask you, what brilliance do you two have that you would disregard what former virtuous ones have expressed by arbitrarily asserting that Confucius and Lao-tzu are surely the equals of the Buddha's Dharma? Your views are in no way equal to the task of discussing what is penetrable and what is impenetrable in the Buddha's Dharma. Pack up your belongings and go seek out a clear-minded Master to explore the Matter* with. O Chi'en and Shōju, the two of you are more in the dark about the Greater and Lesser Courses than that monk who mistook the fourth meditative state for the fourth stage of arhathood. How pitiful that, wherever the winds of degenerate times are blowing, there are so many devils like these two.

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A virtuous one of old once said:

> According to what Confucius and the ancient Chinese emperor Chou-kung said, as well as what the legendary three emperors and five rulers of antiquity wrote, when filial piety governs a household and loyalty governs a nation, they help the nation and profit its people. Even so, this is limited to a single period of time; it does not relieve past or future suffering. Since this does not compare with the benefits from the Buddha Dharma in all three temporal periods, how could theirs possibly not be a mistaken view?

How true they are, these words of the virtuous one of old! He has arrived at a deep understanding of the Truth of the Buddha Dharma and has clarified the principle underlying the secular world. The words of the three emperors and the five rulers still do not come up to the teaching of a saintly Wheel-turning Lord* and should never be discussed alongside what a Lord Brahma or a Shakrendra give voice to.[20] The karmic recompense that these Chinese rulers would have received from their

19. Nihilists are those who believe that there is a self which comes to an end at death.

20. Lord Brahma rules over the lowest of the four meditative heavens in the world of form. Shakrendra, Lord Indra, rules over the world of the thirty-three heavens which comprise the second of the six realms in the world of desire.

governance over their realms would have been decidedly second-rate. And not even Wheel-turning Lords, Lord Brahma, or Shakrendra himself are the equal of a monk who has left home life behind and been ordained. How much less could they be the equal of the Tathagata! Further, the writings of Confucius and Chou-kung cannot compare with the eighteen great Vedic texts, much less come up to the four Vedas themselves.[21] India's Brahmanic Scriptures are still not the equal of the Buddhist Scriptures, not even those of the followers of the Lesser Course. How sad that in a small, remote country like China there is the false doctrine of the three teachings being one and the same teaching.

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Our Fourteenth Ancestor, the bodhisattva Nāgārjuna once said, "The great arhats and the pratyekabuddhas* had direct knowledge of eighty thousand great eons, whereas the great bodhisattvas and the Buddha had direct knowledge of immeasurable eons." People like Confucius and Lao-tzu never knew the past and future within their own single age, so how could they possibly have known of a couple of their past lives? How much less could they have possibly known even a single eon? How much less could they have possibly known a hundred eons or a thousand eons? How much less could they have possibly known eighty thousand great eons? And how much less could they have known an immeasurable eon? When compared with the Buddhas and bodhisattvas who have illumined and known these immeasurable eons more clearly than They knew the palms of Their hands, those like Confucius and Lao-tzu do not even warrant being called ignoramuses. Cover your ears and do not listen to such a phrase as 'the three teachings are one and the same teaching', for among erroneous mouthings, it is the most erroneous.

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Chuang-tzu once said, "Feeling noble and feeling base, despising suffering and craving pleasure, being right and being wrong, having and losing, are all natural states." This viewpoint was already the equal of the Naturalist perspective of non-Buddhists in India.[22] Feeling noble and feeling base, despising suffering and craving pleasure, being right and being wrong, having and losing, are all what we feel from our good or wicked acts. Because Chuang-tzu did not know about the

21. The eighteen Vedic texts are the four Vedas—the Scriptures of Brahmanism—plus fourteen commentaries.

22. The Indian Naturalists denied cause and effect.

karma that fills us up and the karma* that pulls us along,[23] or about understanding what past and future are, he was ignorant of the present, so how could he possibly be the equal of the Buddha Dharma?

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There are some who assert the following:

> Because the Buddha Tathagatas have broadly affirmed the ultimate reality of the universe, every tiny mote of the universe is what all Buddhas have affirmed. Thus, because both the external conditions and the internal characteristics that we receive as karmic recompense are what Tathagatas are affirming, the great earth with its mountains and rivers, the sun, moon, and stars, and the four delusions and three poisons are all being affirmed as well.[24] To see mountains and rivers is to see the Tathagata. The three poisons and the four delusions are nothing other than the Buddha Dharma. Seeing a dust mote is the same as seeing the whole universe. Every moment of time, without exception, is one of fully perfected enlightenment, which we call 'the great liberation'. This has been christened as 'the Way of the Ancestors, which is the Direct Transmission of and the direct pointing to the Truth'.[25]

In Great Sung China, folks like these are as prevalent as rice and flax, bamboo and reeds. The government and the general populace are filled to the brim with them. However, it is not clear just whose offspring these people are, for they have no understanding of the Way of the Ancestors of the Buddha. Even though 'the great earth with its mountains and rivers' describes what Buddhas have awakened to, that does not mean that the Great Earth with Its Mountains and Rivers is something that ordinary people might not suddenly encounter. But they have not learned or even heard of the principle that all Buddhas have come to realize. For such folks to say

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23. The karma that fills us up refers to the purely individual characteristics that we may be born with, such as being born with certain abilities or propensities. The karma that pulls us along refers to the general characteristics that we share with many, such as being born as a human being.

24. The four delusions are that the physical world is permanent, that the world is a source of pleasure, that the physical world is pure, and that there exists a real, unchanging, personal self.

25. This quotation borrows the vocabulary of Buddhism in order to support what is essentially a materialist perspective.

that seeing a dust mote is equivalent to seeing the whole universe is like their saying that being a commoner is equivalent to being a king. Further, why do they not say that seeing the whole universe is like seeing a single dust mote? If the view of these folks was equivalent to the Great Truth of the Buddhas and Ancestors, the Buddhas need not have left home life behind, our Ancestral Master Bodhidharma need not have put in an appearance, and none of us would be able to realize the Way. Even if such folks thought they had penetrated the meaning of "That which arises is the very thing that is beyond arising," it would still not be what the Truth is really saying.

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Tripitaka Master Paramārtha once said,[26] "In China, there are two fortunate things. The first is that there are no rakshasas.[27] The second is that there is no one who is a non-Buddhist." This saying is indeed something imported by a non-Buddhist Brahman from India. Even if there were no one who had deliberately followed the ways of non-Buddhists, that does not mean that there could not have been folks who gave rise to non-Buddhist views. Even though rakshasas had yet to be seen, this does not mean that there were none who were the equivalent of non-Buddhists. Because ours is a small country in a remote corner of the world, it is not the same as India or China. Though the Buddha Dharma has been studied a bit here, there is no one who has grasped what awakening is as they understood it in India.

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A virtuous one of old once said:

> Nowadays, there are ever so many monks who are returning to lay life. Fearing lest they will then have to become the working dog of some lord, they enter into non-Buddhist paths. They set themselves up as teachers by stealing the principles of the Buddha Dharma and, undetected, apply them to explain Chuang-tzu and Lao-tzu. Ultimately they create total confusion, misleading innocents as to what is right

26. Paramārtha was a monastic scholar from Western India who was invited to come to South China by Emperor Wu of Liang to translate Scriptures. He arrived in 546 C.E., about a decade after Bodhidharma's death.

27. A rakshasa is a type of malevolent demon who stalks the night.

> and what is wrong by claiming that theirs is the view that unfolds what the Vedas taught.[28]

Keep in mind that that bunch who do not know right from wrong and confuse the Buddha Dharma with the teachings of Chuang-tzu and Lao-tzu create confusion for someone who is a neophyte. They are our present-day Chi'en and Shōju. Not only is this the utmost in human idiocy, it also shows their lack of study and training, which is all too obvious, all too clear. Among the senior monks and their disciples during recent times in the Sung dynasty, not even a single one of them knew that the teachings of Confucius and Lao-tzu were not the equal of the Buddha Dharma. Although people who called themselves the offspring of the Buddhas and Ancestors were as prolific as rice and flax, bamboo and reeds, and filled the mountains and fields of the nine divisions of China, there was not a person, not even half a person, upon whom it dawned that the Buddha Dharma was foremost in insight and far beyond what was put forth by Confucius and Lao-tzu. Only that Old Buddha, my late Master Tendō, clearly understood that the Buddha Dharma was not one and the same with the sayings of Confucius and Lao-tzu, a fact that he kept affirming day and night. Though there were those who had reputations as teachers and academic lecturers on the Scriptures and commentaries, it had not dawned on any of them that the Buddha Dharma far surpasses the borderlands of Confucius and Lao-tzu. Many a modern academic lecturer over the past century has studied the customs of those who do seated meditation and follow the Way, hoping to walk off with what these practitioners had come to comprehend. Such a one, I dare say, is making a terrible mistake.

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In Confucius's writings, there is 'the person with inborn knowledge,' whereas in Buddhist Scriptures, there is no one who has such inborn knowledge.[29] In the Buddha Dharma there is talk of sacred relics, whereas Confucius and Lao-tzu did not know whether there are sacred relics or not. Even if the two intended to jumble their two teachings together, ultimately they would not end up with a broad, far-reaching perspective, whether it was penetrable or not.

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28. At the time of this quotation, the Chinese government was anti-Buddhist yet supported those who claimed to be Taoists or to have knowledge of non-Buddhist Indian philosophy.

29. Though neither Confucius nor Dōgen specifically identifies what this inborn knowledge is, the context of Confucius's writings implies that it refers to instinctively knowing how to behave like a sagely one, and without having to be taught. Dōgen does not seem to be as concerned with what the knowledge is about as with the notion of having any type of inborn knowledge.

It says in the *Analects of Confucius,* "The person who is born already knowing something is a superior being. The person who knows something through study is next. The person who learns it through great effort is next to him. The one who fails to learn it even with great effort, people will treat as the lowest." If he is saying that there is inborn knowledge, then his is the fault of denying causality. In the Buddha Dharma there is no talk that denies causality. When the monk in the fourth meditative state reached the end of his life, he immediately fell into the error of slandering Buddha. Should you think that the teachings of Confucius and Lao-tzu are on a par with the Buddha Dharma, your error in slandering Buddha during your lifetime would be profound indeed. O you scholars, you should quickly discard the notion that erroneously considers the teachings of Confucius and Lao-tzu to be in accord with the Buddha Dharma. Those who put store in that viewpoint and do not discard it ultimately end up in some evil world.[30]

O you scholars, be very clear about this: Confucius and Lao-tzu did not know the teaching on the three temporal worlds, nor did they know the principle of cause and effect, nor did they know anything about how to establish peacefulness in one continent, much less establishing it in all four continents. They still knew nothing about the six celestial worlds of desire, much less could they have known the Teaching concerning the nine divisions within the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form. They could not have known anything about the small-thousandfold worlds or the middle-thousandfold worlds, so how could there have been a ruler who had encountered or known about three-thousand great-thousandfold worlds? Even in the singular nation of China, Confucius and Lao-tzu were petty officials who had not risen to an imperial rank. They are not to be compared with the Tathagata who was the Lord of the three-thousand great-thousandfold worlds. In the Tathagata's case, there were Lord Brahma, the imperial Shakrendra, and the Wheel-turning Lords, among others, offering Him veneration and protection day and night, and continually asking him to give voice to the Dharma. Confucius and Lao-tzu did not have merit like this. They were merely commoners wandering about through the realms of existence. They never knew anything of the path to achieving liberation through renouncing the world, so how could they possibly have fully realized the True Nature of all things as the Tathagata did? If they had not fully realized It, how could they possibly have been the equal of the World-honored One? Confucius and Lao-tzu had no inner meritorious behavior nor any outer usefulness. They could never have reached the level that the World-honored One did. How could the Buddha have possibly given

30. The evil worlds are those of the hells, the animals, and the hungry ghosts.

voice to the false teaching that the three are of one accord? Confucius and Lao-tzu were unable to thoroughly penetrate the borders of the world and what lies beyond those borders. They neither knew nor saw the breadth of the world, nor its magnitude. And not only that, they had not seen the most minute forms and could not have known what the shortest span of a moment is. The World-honored One saw the most minute forms and knew directly how long the shortest span of a moment is, so how could we possibly treat Confucius or Lao-tzu as one equal to Him? Those like Confucius, Lao-tzu, Chuang-tzu, and Hui-tzu were simply common men.[31] They could not have even come up to the level of a stream-entrant of the Lesser Course, so how could they possibly have been the equal of those at the second, third, or fourth stages* of arhathood?

At the same time, that you scholars, out of your ignorance, put them on the same level with the Buddhas is plainly your wandering deeper into your delusions. Not only were Confucius and Lao-tzu ignorant of the three temporal worlds and therefore did not know what the many eons are, they were unable to comprehend what a single moment of mindfulness is or to know the One All-embracing Buddha Mind. They do not even bear comparison with the celestial beings of sun and moon, nor could they compare with the Four Great Guardian Kings or the host of celestial beings. In comparison with the World-honored One, whether they be monastics or lay people, they are wandering off in delusion.

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It says in the *Biographies of Commoners:*[32]

> Yin-hsi was a high-ranking government official in the Chou dynasty. He was particularly skilled in reading heavenly omens. One day, he was traveling to the east to investigate an unusual meteorological condition. Upon encountering it, as might be expected, he met up with Lao-tzu, who had composed a five thousand word text at Yin-hsi's request.[33] Yin-hsi also, for his part, compiled a nine-section work, entitled *The Barrier Gatekeeper* (C. *Kuan Ling Tzu*),

31. Hui-tzu was a famous orator during the Wei dynasty.

32. The *Biographies of Commoners* (C. *Lieh Chuan*) is the major section of a classic Chinese work known as the *Records Compiled by the Historian* (C. *Shih-chi*), which is one of the Chinese dynastic histories, compiled in the first century B.C.E. by Ssu-ma Ch'ien. It was a basic text in the classical education of young boys, who were expected to memorize large portions of it, if not the whole.

33. Later known as *The Way and Its Power* (C: *Tao-te Ching*).

> modeled on the *Scripture on Lao-tzu's Converting the Barbarians* (C. *Hua Hu Ching*).[34] Later, when Lao-tzu was about to cross over the barrier to the Western Region, Yin-hsi thought he would like to accompany him. Lao-tzu said, "If what you desire within your heart is to be my follower, you must bring me the heads of seven people, including those of your father and mother. Then you will be able to come with me." Yin-hsi followed Lao-tzu's instruction, but on his return, the seven heads had all turned into those of wild boars.
>
> A virtuous one of old once said:
>
> > Thus, Confucianists who are well-versed in their secular texts are worshipful even to carved images of their parents, but when Lao-tzu laid down his rules, he had Yin-hsi harm his parents. In the gateway to the Tathagata's Teaching, great compassion is the starting point of training, so how could Lao-tzu have possibly made such a topsy-turvy view the basis for his method of teaching?[35]

Long ago, there was that wrong-minded bunch who treated the World-honored One as on a par with Lao-tzu, and nowadays, there are foolish fellows who treat the World-honored One as on a par with Confucius and Lao-tzu. How can we not pity them! Confucius and Lao-tzu cannot even measure up to the Wheel-turning Lords who govern the secular world by means of the ten good deeds.[36] How could those legendary three emperors and five rulers of antiquity, of whom Confucians speak, possibly come up to the level of the Wheel-turning Lords of the Gold, Silver, Copper, and Iron Wheels, who are equipped with thousands of the seven precious jewels* and who have governance over the four continents or rule some three-thousandfold world? Confucius himself cannot even be compared with those legendary ones. The Buddhas and the Ancestors of past, present, and future have all considered the starting point of training to lie in filial-like piety towards one's parents, one's Master and fellow monks, and the Three Treasures, as well as in the

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34. A pseudo-scriptural treatise that attempts to show through various accounts that Buddhism is an inferior, watered-down form of Taoism suited for barbarians but not for Chinese and that Lao-tzu went to India (the Western Region) where he became the Buddha and converted the 'barbarians'.

35. This quotation is from the commentary on Tendai Chigi's lectures on *Great Quietness and Reflection (Makashikan).*

36. 'The ten good deeds' refers to actively abstaining from behaving contrary to the Ten Great Precepts.

making of alms offerings to those who are ill, for example. Since time immemorial, They have never considered the harming of one's parents to be the starting point of training. Therefore, Lao-tzu and the Buddha Dharma are not one and the same. To kill one's parents will invariably create karma that will be felt in one's next life, a life in which it is a foregone conclusion that one will fall into a hellish world. Even though Lao-tzu may idly chatter on about emptiness, those who harm their parents will not escape the arising of retribution.

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In the *Ching-te Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, it says the following:

> Our Second Chinese Ancestor was wont to voice a lament, saying, "The teachings of Confucius and Lao-tzu are merely concerned with the arts of courtesy and the standards for social behavior, whereas the writings of Chuang-tzu and the *Book of Changes* have never come close to the Wondrous Principle."
>
> Then one day, he heard that Great Master Bodhidharma had taken up residence in Shaolin Monastery. "One who has reached the Other Shore is not far away. With him, I shall indeed attain the Wondrous Frontier."

People today should clearly trust that the authentic Transmission of the Buddha Dharma in China was wholly due just to the strength of our Second Chinese Ancestor. Though our First Chinese Ancestor, Bodhidharma, came from the West, had it not been for our Second Ancestor, the Buddha Dharma would not have been passed on. If our Second Ancestor had not passed on the Buddha Dharma, there would be no Buddha Dharma in Eastern lands today. In short, our Second Ancestor is not to be grouped among the masses.

It says in the *Record of the Transmission of the Lamp,* "The monk Shinkō was a broad-minded, scholarly gentleman.[37] For a long time, he resided in the Ilo district. He was well read in a wide variety of subjects and was able to discuss abstruse principles." Our Second Ancestor's being well read in a wide variety of subjects in the distant past may well be different by far from what people today read. After having awakened to the Dharma and having the kesa* Transmitted to him, he made no remarks like, "In the past, I was wrong to think that the teachings of Confucius and Lao-tzu were merely concerned with the arts of courtesy and the

37. Shinkō was Great Master Eka's name when he was a young monk.

standards for social behavior." Keep in mind that our Second Ancestor had already thoroughly grasped that the teachings of Confucius and Lao-tzu were devoid of the Buddha Dharma, so why do his distant descendants go counter to their ancestral parent and insist that the teachings of Confucius and Lao-tzu are in accord with the Buddha's Dharma? You need to know that this is the spreading of false teaching. If someone were not a distant descendant of our Second Ancestor, such a one might rely upon the explanations of a Shōju or his likes. But if you would be a true offspring of our Second Ancestor, do not say that the three teachings are in accord.

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When the Tathagata was in the world, there was a non-Buddhist who was called the Mighty Debater. He was of the opinion that there was no one his equal in debate, due to the enormity of his prowess, which is why he was called the Mighty Debater. Receiving the funds raised by five hundred Licchavis to pay for his services,[38] he selected five hundred difficult, debatable issues, and came to pose them to the Buddha. When he arrived at where the Buddha was residing, he asked the Buddha, "Is there one ultimate truth or, for the sake of people, are there many ultimate truths?"

The Buddha replied, "There is just one Ultimate Truth."

The Mighty Debater said, "We teachers each have our own ultimate truth, which we teach. Among non-Buddhists, each believes his own teaching is right and slanders the ways of others. Since we mutually judge what is right or wrong in what everyone else is teaching, we end up with many ultimate truths."

At that moment, Migasīsa, whom the World-honored One had already converted and who had gone beyond the stage of still being a student of Buddhism, came and stood next to the Buddha.[39] The Buddha asked the Mighty Debater, "Among the many ways that truths are expressed for the sake of others, whose is the foremost for you?" The Mighty Debater replied, "Migasīsa's is foremost."

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38. The Licchavis were a group within the country of Vaishali who were early supporters of Shakyamuni.

39. Migasīsa was a Brahman who was converted to Buddhism after he had undertaken to debate with the Buddha and ended up dumbfounded by Him. By the time of this story, he had already realized arhathood.

The Buddha then said, "If his is foremost, why then did he discard his own way and become My disciple, thereby entering into My Truth?"

The Mighty Debater, fully realizing this, dropped his head in embarrassment and then, taking refuge, entered the Way. At this time, the Buddha, in order to thoroughly express the Matter, spoke the following in verse:

When someone thinks, "Mine is the ultimate in truth,"
When someone falls in love with his own opinions,
When someone assumes that he is right and all others wrong,
Then none such yet knows the Ultimate Truth.

Such people readily enter into wrangling and debate,
All eager to clarify what 'nirvana' really means.
In squabbling over who's right, who's wrong,
Those who outwit feel elated, the outsmarted in misery sink.

The victors fall into vanity's pit,
While the bested plunge into some gloomy hell.
Thus it is that those whose discernment is truly wise
Fall not into either of these two ways.

O Mighty Debater, by all means know
That in the Dharma for My disciples
There is no meaningless 'emptiness', no mundane 'truth'.
So what is it that you so desire to seek from Me?

If you desire to debase what I have voiced,
Forthwith you already lack the grounds for doing that.
Impossible the task to know what the whole of knowledge is.
Strive for that and you strive in vain.

Now, this is what the World-honored One's golden words were like. O you foolish and dimwitted people in the Eastern lands, do not recklessly turn your back on what the Buddha taught, saying that there are paths equal to the Way of the Buddha, for that would be slandering both the Buddha and the Dharma. Those in India, from Migasīsa and the Mighty Debater to the Brahmacharins like

Dirghanakha and Shrenika,[40] were eminent scholars, the likes of whom have never existed in Eastern lands, even from ancient times. What is more, Confucius and Lao-tzu could never come up to them. All of them abandoned their personal ways and took refuge in the Buddha's Way. If we were now to compare worldly persons like Confucius and Lao-tzu with the Buddha Dharma, even those who listened would be involving themselves in wrongdoing. And what is more, even arhats and pratyekabuddhas will all eventually become bodhisattvas, with not even one finishing up in the Lesser Courses. But when it comes to Confucius and Lao-tzu who never entered the Buddha's Way, how could we possibly say that they are the equals of Buddhas? That indeed would be an enormously false view. To conclude, in that the World-honored Tathagata goes far beyond all others, He is praised and so recognized by all the Buddha Tathagatas and by all the great bodhisattvas, as well as by Lord Brahma and Lord Shakrendra. It is something that our twenty-eight Indian Ancestors and our six Chinese Ancestors all knew. In short, all who have the capacity to do the training and explore the Matter with their Master have come to know this. As people of these present degenerate days of the Dharma, do not involve yourself with the wild words of those ignoramuses of the Sung dynasty who speak of the three teachings being one, for theirs is the height of ignorance.

On a day during the summer retreat in the seventh year of the Kenchō era (1255), I finished making this copy of the Master's first draft.

Ejō

40. As used here, Brahmacharin refers to someone who was a Brahman priest and scholar in his younger years, and later converted to Buddhism. There is a tradition that Dirghanakha was Shariputra's father and became a Buddhist, due to his son's example. His name, actually a nickname, means He of the Long Nails, referring to his not cutting his nails because he was so deeply absorbed in his scholarly pursuits. Shrenika's pre-Buddhist teaching is discussed in Discourse 1: A Discourse on Doing One's Utmost in Practicing the Way of the Buddhas *(Bendowa).*

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On the One Hundred and Eight Gates to What the Dharma Illumines

(Ippyakuhachi Hōmyōmon)

Translator's Introduction: Except for the final paragraphs in this text, which were written by Dōgen, this work is comprised of a lengthy quotation in Chinese from the *Scriptural Collection of the Past Deeds of the Buddha (Butsu Hongyō Jikkyō)*.

Gomyō Bodhisattva,* the One Who Is a Guardian of Wisdom's Light, then brought to a close His study of the family into which He was to be reborn.[1] At that time, there was a celestial palace in the Tushita Heaven named Lofty Banners. Its length and width were equal—sixty yojanas.* From time to time, the Bodhisattva would go up into this palace and give voice to the essence of the Dharma for the sake of the celestial beings residing in the Tushita Heaven. On this particular occasion, the Bodhisattva went up into this palace and, having finished His peaceful seated meditation, He gave instruction to the celestial ones of the Tushita Heaven, saying, "You who are celestial beings, by all means come gather around Me, since My present being will soon descend into a human form. I now wish to explain in their entirety the gates to what the Dharma illumines, for they are known as the gates which are the skillful means for comprehending the forms that all thoughts and things take. I leave these Teachings as My final instructions for you, that you may remember Me by Them. If you listen to what these gates of the Dharma are, they will surely produce great joy and delight within you."

When the great assembly of celestial beings in the Tushita Heaven—including the beautiful celestial women and their entourage—heard what the Bodhisattva had just said, they came up

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* See *Glossary*.

1. Gomyō Bodhisattva was in the Tushita Heaven, prior to His rebirth as Shakyamuni Buddha.

and gathered about Him. Seeing the multitude that had gathered in the celestial palace, He desired to give expression to the Dharma for their sake.

Employing His marvelous spiritual abilities, He produced atop the original palace of Lofty Banners a celestial palace so grand and spacious that it covered the four continents.[2] So delightful was it in its ordered grandeur that few things could be likened to it. Lofty in its majesty, it was encrusted with masses of jewels. Among all the celestial palaces within the world of desire, there was none to compare with it. When the celestial beings within the world of form saw this extraordinary palace, they felt as if their own palaces resembled burial mounds.

Gomyō Bodhisattva had already performed valued deeds, planted virtuous roots, brought about much happiness, and was now endowed with much merit. He ascended to the Lion's Seat,* which He had so magnificently created, and sat down upon it. While seated on this Lion's Throne, Gomyō Bodhisattva adorned it with intricate patterns of jewels beyond measure. He spread over this seat all manner of celestial robes, and perfumed that seat with various types of wondrous incense which He burned in innumerable bejeweled censers. He brought forth all manner of marvelously scented flowers which he scattered over the ground. Around his lofty Dharma Seat were many treasures of great value. Hundreds of thousands of myriad light beams shone forth, magnificently illumining this palace of His. From top to bottom, the palace was hung with jeweled nets, and from those nets hung many golden bells, whose tinkling sound was wondrous indeed. Countless light rays of various types shone forth from this great palace. This priceless palace was hung with thousands of myriad banners of various brilliant hues. From that great palace hung all sorts of tassels. Beautiful celestial maidens by the hundreds of thousands of millions, each carrying various varieties of the Seven Precious Jewels,* sang the praises of the Bodhisattva in songs that told of His countless past merits. The guardian lords of the earth were there by the billions, standing to His left and right, protecting this palace. The Guardian Lord Indras by the millions made prostrations before this palace, and millions of celestial Brahmas made their

2. That is, the four that lie to the north, south, east, and west of Mount Sumeru.

venerative offerings. Also, millions upon millions upon millions of bodhisattvas came to protect this palace, and the Buddhas of the ten quarters were there by untold millions, keeping watch over it. Practice and training previously done over countless eons as well as acts of freeing others from their suffering were achieving their spiritual reward. Good causes and their accompanying conditions were being fulfilled and were being promoted day and night, so that immeasurable merit was making everything magnificent. All of this is too difficult to express, too difficult to put into words.

The Bodhisattva, sitting upon that great exquisite Lion's Dharma Seat, addressed this multitude, saying, "Now, O you celestial beings, as to the hundred and eight gates to what the Dharma illumines, when bodhisattvas and monks are in a Tushita Heaven palace awaiting their next rebirth, and are about to descend through conception to be born in the human world, they must, of necessity, proclaim and voice to this celestial host these one hundred and eight gates to what the Dharma illumines, leaving them for the remaining celestial beings to memorize. O you celestial beings, with a heart of utmost sincerity, listen closely to and absorb what I am now going to voice, which is the one hundred and eight gates to what the Dharma illumines."

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Right trust is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we keep our persevering mind from being defeated.

A pure heart is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it is not sullied by defilements.

Joy is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it is evidence of a tranquil mind.

A loving feeling of ease is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it purifies our mind.

Being proper in our bodily behavior is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for due to that, the actions of our body, speech, and mind are pure.

Being pure in our speech is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it eradicates the four evil attitudes associated with beings in the hells, asuras, hungry ghosts,* and beasts.*

Being pure in our intentions is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for this eradicates the three poisons of greed, anger, and delusion.

Being mindful of Buddha is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby our perception of a Buddha is clear.

Being mindful of the Dharma is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby our seeing what is Dharma is clear.

Being mindful of the Sangha is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it helps us to be steadfast in our pursuit of the Way.

Being mindful of generosity is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for due to that we do not expect rewards.

Being mindful of the Precepts is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for due to that we fulfill all our vows.

Being mindful of the highest is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we give rise to a heart that seeks the Truth far and wide.

Being benevolent towards others is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby good roots take hold in all of life's situations.

Being compassionate is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we do not kill or harm any living being.

Being morally good is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we rid ourselves of all that is not morally good.

Renunciation is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we weary of the five greeds and abandon them.[3]

3. That is, being greedy for possessions, sexual pleasures, food and drink, fame, and sleep.

Reflecting on impermanence is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we perceive the cravings of those in the three temporal worlds of past, present, and future.

Reflecting on suffering is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we give up all cravings.

Reflecting on there being no unchanging, permanent self is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we refrain from fettering ourselves by thinking that such a false self is what we truly are.

Reflecting on the tranquil realm of nirvana is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we do not disrupt the intention we hold in our heart.

Repentance is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we experience tranquility within our hearts and minds.

Humility is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby the malevolence of others vanishes.

Sincerity is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for, having it, we will not deceive lofty or mundane beings.

Truth is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for, having it, we will not deceive ourselves.

Our pursuing the Dharma is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for we are humbly submitting ourselves to the pursuit of the Dharma.

The Three Refuges in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha are a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for they cleanse the three evil paths that those in hells, those who are asuras, and those who are beasts pursue.[4]

4. Traditionally, the three are beasts, those in some hell, and hungry ghosts. At the same time, asuras may resemble hungry ghosts in their constant hunger for power.

Recognizing the good intentions of others is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we do not ignore their good roots.

Repaying our indebtedness to others is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we do not cheat or disregard others.

Not deceiving ourselves is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we do not go around praising ourselves.

Acting for the sake of sentient beings is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we do not slander others.

Expressing the Dharma for the sake of others is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it is our acting in conformity with the Dharma.

Being aware of the limitations of time is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for then we do not treat lightly the words spoken for our benefit.

Weeding out self-pride is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for then we fulfill wise discernment.

Not giving rise to wicked intentions is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for then we protect ourselves and others.

Recognizing that hindrances do not actually exist is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for then our mind is free of doubts.

*Trusting that we may understand is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for then we can fully comprehend the One Great Matter.**

Reflecting on what is impure is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for then we may abandon the mind that is tainted with craving.

Ceasing from quarreling is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we eradicate being offended and accusing others.

Not being foolish is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for then we cease killing living beings.

Taking pleasure in the meaning of the Dharma is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for then we are seeing what the meaning of the Dharma is.

Love of the illumination of the Dharma is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for then we attain the illumination of the Dharma.

Seeking to hear much of the Dharma is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for this leads to the right understanding of how all thoughts and things appear.

Right skillful means are a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for they go hand-in-hand with Right Actions.

Knowing the true name and form of all thoughts and things is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for this clears away all manner of obstacles.

Seeing how to eliminate causes is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we are able to free ourselves from suffering and delusion.

Freeing our mind free of 'friend' and 'enemy' is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for when we are in the midst of those who are hostile or friendly towards us, we treat them all with impartiality.

Helping others with subtle provisional teachings is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for we know what the suffering of others is.

Treating all elements as equal is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for then it eradicates any need for having to harmonize everything.

Our sense organs are gates to what the Dharma illumines, for therewith we practice the Authentic Path.

Realizing that all things are beyond birth and death is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for then we realize what 'cessation of suffering' really means.

Our body as an abode for our awareness is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it brings all thoughts and things to a tranquil state.

Our feelings as an abode for our awareness are gates to what the Dharma illumines, for they eradicate all entanglements with outer inducements.

Our mind as an abode for our awareness is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we can see that our mind is like a phantom.

The Dharma as an abode for our awareness is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby our wise discernment is not blurred.

The four kinds of Right Effort are gates to what the Dharma illumines, for they eradicate all evil and produce all manner of good.[5]

The four foundations of the marvelous spiritual abilities are gates to what the Dharma illumines, for they lighten both body and mind.[6]

What lies at the root of our faith is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we do not blindly follow the many words of others.

What lies at the root of our right effort is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we easily attain many forms of wise discernment.

What lies at the root of our mindfulness is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we easily perform various positive deeds.

What lies at the root of our concentration is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it our heart and mind become immaculate.

What lies at the root of our astuteness is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we see what all thoughts and things really are.

5. The four kinds of right effort are to prevent faults from arising, to abandon faults when they have arisen, to produce merit, and to increase merit that has already arisen.

6. The four foundations are concentration of the will, concentrated effort, concentration of thought, and concentrated investigation into the principle of Reality.

The power of faith is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it surpasses the powers of demons.

The power of right effort is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we will not regress or turn aside.

The power of mindfulness is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we will not blindly follow others.

The power of concentration is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we rid ourselves of all idle thoughts.

The power of astuteness is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we free ourselves from the two extremes of dualistic thinking.

Mindfulness, which is a characteristic of enlightenment, is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it is like the wisdom inherent in all thoughts and things.

The ability to distinguish between the true and the false, which is a characteristic of enlightenment, is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it illumines all thoughts and things.

Right effort, which is a characteristic of enlightenment, is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we easily comprehend what enlightenment is.

Joyfulness, which is a characteristic of enlightenment, is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we attain various types of concentration.

Ridding ourselves of all evil, which is a characteristic of enlightenment, is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we are already managing what we do.

Concentration, which is a characteristic of enlightenment, is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we recognize the equality of all thoughts and things.

Letting go of attachments, which is a characteristic of enlightenment, is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we weary of the world and can abandon all that arises.

Right view is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we can realize the Saintly Path and exhaust the stream of rebirths.

Right thought is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we eliminate all discriminatory judgments, as well as any lack of discernment.

Right speech is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we will recognize that all names, voicings, and words are simply like vibrations.

Right livelihood is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we rid ourselves of all our evil ways.

Right action is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we arrive at the Other Shore.

Right mindfulness is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we do not intellectualize all thoughts and things.

Right concentration is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we can attain the meditative state that is beyond scattered thoughts.

The mind that aspires to realize the Truth is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it does not dismiss the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

Reliance on the Three Treasures is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we do not hanker after lesser courses.

Right belief is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we receive the Buddha's supreme Dharma.

Progressing is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we fully perfect the practice of developing good roots.

The practice of charity is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we continue in every moment to perfect a pleasant countenance, to adorn the Buddha lands, and to teach and guide sentient beings who are stingy or greedy.

The practice of moral conduct is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we distance ourselves from the hardships of evil paths so that we may teach and guide sentient beings who are acting contrary to the Precepts.

The practice of patience is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we give up all hate, arrogance, flattery, and foolishness so that we may teach and guide sentient beings who are plagued by such feelings.

The practice of zealousness is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we acquire all manner of morally good thoughts and things so that we may teach and guide sentient beings who are lazy or inattentive.

The practice of meditation is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we may perfect all manner of contemplative practices so that we may teach and guide sentient beings who are mentally scattered.

The practice of wise discernment is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it we may eliminate the darkness of our ignorance and attachment to our opinions so that we may teach and guide sentient beings who are foolish or confused.

Provisional teachings are gates to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of them we display ourselves in accordance with the everyday dignified behavior of a monk, so that we may teach and guide others and thereby fulfill the Dharma of all Buddhas.

The four exemplary acts are gates to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of them we are accepting of all sentient beings, and when we fully realize enlightenment, we give the Dharma as alms to all sentient beings.[7]

Spiritually teaching and guiding sentient beings is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for we neither seek self-gratification nor tire of teaching and guiding.

Acceptance of the True Teaching is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it eliminates the defiling passions of all sentient beings.

Garnering good fortune is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it profits all sentient beings.

Doing meditative practices is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it perfects the ten abilities.[8]

Being tranquil is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it perfects the meditative state of a Tathagata with which we are equipped.

Being astute is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for by means of it our wise discernment is realized and perfected.

Entering the realm of unimpeded eloquence is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for once having received the Eye of the True Teaching, one acts to fulfill It.

Entering into all manner of spiritual actions is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for once having received the Eye of a Buddha, one acts to fulfill It.

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7. The four are offering alms, using kindly speech, showing benevolence, and being in sympathy with. They are also called the Four Wisdoms. Dōgen discusses these in more detail in Discourse 45: On the Four Exemplary Acts of a Bodhisattva *(Bodaisatta Shishōbō)*.

8. The ten are: ridding oneself of attachments, deepening one's devotion, effectively teaching and guiding others, understanding what people are thinking, spiritually satisfying people, being unceasing in exerting oneself, being accepting of all true teachings while not abandoning the Mahayana, exuding one's Buddha Nature through every pore of one's being, helping turn all people toward the Dharma so that one may lead them to Its perfection, and spiritually satisfying all kinds of people with even a single phrase.

Fulfilling one's expressions of homage is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for once such a one has heard the Dharma of any and all Buddhas, that person can accept and maintain It.

Attaining unimpeded eloquence is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it creates delight in all sentient beings.

Being a willing follower is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for one is acting in obedience to the Teaching of Buddhas.

Realizing the Teaching of non-arising is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for thereby we receive affirmation of It.

Having realized the position of being beyond regression or turning aside is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for it is possessed of the Dharma of all the Buddhas of the past.

The wisdom that guides us from one spiritual position to another is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for when the crown of our head is aspersed, we will have fulfilled all manner of wise discernment.

The position of those who have had their head aspersed is a gate to what the Dharma illumines, for having been born and become monks, they have finally been able to realize supreme, fully perfected enlightenment.[9]

At this time Gomyō Bodhisattva, having finished His instructions, addressed this whole celestial assembly, saying, "All you celestial beings, by all means keep in mind that these are the one hundred and eight gates to what the Dharma illumines, which I bequeath to you celestial beings. May you accept and keep to them, holding them always in your thoughts. I pray, do not forget them or lose sight of them."

9. The aspersing of the head marks the point when one goes from being a bodhisattva to becoming a Buddha.

These, therefore, are the one hundred and eight gates to what the Dharma illumines. When all bodhisattvas who are bound to be reborn one final time are about to descend from the Tushita Heaven to be born in the land of Jambudvipa,* they invariably proclaim the one hundred and eight gates to what the Dharma illumines for the sake of the celestial multitudes in the Tushita Heaven, and thereby pass on the Teaching to those celestial ones, for this is the invariable method of Buddhas.

Gomyō Bodhisattva was the name of Shakyamuni Buddha when He was in the fourth celestial heaven at the point of being reborn one more time. In the Chinese T'ien-sheng Era an imperial aide named Lee compiled the *T'ien-sheng Era Record of the Far-reaching Torch*, in which is recorded what he called 'The One Hundred and Eight Gates to What the Dharma Illumines'. Those who have explored, clarified, and understood it are few, whereas those who do not know of it are as common as rice grains, flax stalks, bamboo canes, and river reeds. I have now brought them together for the sake of you people who are beginners, as well as for you old-timers. Those of you who aspire to ascend to the Lion's Seat in order to be teachers of lofty persons and commoners should explore them in detail. Unless you have lived in the Tushita Heaven as one who is bound to only one life more, none of you is a Buddha yet, so, my practitioners, do not vainly indulge in pride. For bodhisattvas who have but one life more, there is no intermediary stage.[10]

10. This is the interval between death and rebirth.

93

On Life and Death

(Shōji)

Translator's Introduction: In this text, Dōgen plays with various nuances of the word *shōji*. As 'living and dying', it refers to ever-flowing, ever-changing conditions that have no permanency, whereas 'life and death' refers to the delusion of static, unchanging conditions that are created by a judgmental mind. 'Birth and death' refers to specific moments within the flow of 'living and dying'.

"Because there is Buddha within living and dying, life and death do not exist." And in response, the following was said, "Because the Buddha did not exist within life and death, He was not infatuated with living and dying." These words are the very heart of what was said by the two Meditation Masters Kassan and Jōzan. Since they are the words of persons who had realized the Way, we can certainly profit by them, and not in vain.

Anyone who wishes to be freed from life and death should clarify this principle. Should you seek for Buddha outside of living and dying, you are like the one who pointed his cart north and drove off to the country of Etsu in the south, or like someone who faces south, hoping to see the North Star. It would be your piling up more and more causes of life and death while missing the path to liberation. Simply put, living and dying is what nirvana is, for there is nothing to despise in living and dying, nor anything to be wished for in nirvana.

At this very time, there is a distinction that frees us, right off, from life and death. It is a mistake to think that we go from being alive to being dead. Being alive is a position at one moment in time: it already has its past and it will have its future. Therefore, within the Buddha Dharma, we say that life is beyond just the act of being born. Death is also a position at one moment in time, and it too has its past and its future. Accordingly, we say that death is beyond the act of just dying.

In the time we call 'living', there is nothing except life, and in the time we call 'dying', there is nothing except death. Thus, when life comes, it is simply life, and when death comes, it is simply death. When facing up to them, do not say that you want to cling to the one or push away the other. This living and dying is precisely what the treasured life of a Buddha is. If we hate life and want to throw it away, that is just our attempt to throw away the treasured life of Buddha. And if we go no farther than this and clutch onto life and death, this too is our throwing away

the treasured life of Buddha by limiting ourselves to the superficial appearance of Buddha. When there is nothing we hate and nothing we cling to, then, for the first time, we enter the Heart of Buddha.

However, do not use your mind to measure this and do not use your voice just to mouth it. When we simply let go of and forget all about '<u>my</u> body' and '<u>my</u> mind', relinquishing them to the Life of Buddha and letting them be put into operation from the vantage point of Buddha, then, when we rely on this—following where It leads—without forcing the body or laboring the mind, we free ourselves from life and death, and become Buddha.

And who would want to become stuck in their own mind? There is an extremely easy way to become Buddha. Simply, do not adhere to any evil whatsoever; do not become attached to life or death; have compassion for all sentient beings; respect those who are spiritually above you and have pity on those who are spiritually less advanced than you; rid yourself of the mental attitude that deplores the ten thousand things as they sprout up and the mental attitude that craves them; let your mind be free of judgmentalism and free of worry, for to do so is what we call being a Buddha. And do not seek after anything else.

94

On the Mind's Search for Truth

(Dōshin)

Translator's Introduction: Some copies of this short, undated text bear the title of "On the Buddha's Way" (*Butsudō*), but it is not a reworking of Discourse 51.

In our pursuit of the Buddha's Way, first off, we should consider our mind's search for Truth to be foremost. Those who know what the mind's search for Truth really is are rare indeed, so we need to inquire what it is from people who clearly know.

Even though people in general are said to have a mind that is searching for the Truth, there are those people who truly do not have a searching mind. And there are some people who truly have a searching mind, though it is unrecognized by others. Thus, it is difficult to know who has or does not have such a mind. For the most part, we do not listen to what foolish or wicked people say, much less do we trust them. And we should not treat our own mind as foremost, but consider only what the Buddha expressed to be foremost. Constantly, day and night, we should hold in our mind our search for Truth, desiring and praying to realize what True Wisdom is in this world of ours.

In these degenerate days of the Dharma, those who genuinely have a mind that searches for the Truth are not many. Even so, please keep impermanence in mind, and do not forget that the world is transient and human life is uncertain. And we need not consciously keep in mind the notion that, "I am thinking about the transiency of the world." Just give emphasis to the Dharma and do not take '<u>my</u> body' or '<u>my</u> life' too seriously. And, for the sake of the Dharma, do not be resentful towards your body or your life.

Next, you should deeply revere the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Be desirous of making alms offerings to the Three Treasures, even if it means changing your life or reforming your very self. Whether asleep or awake, we should respectfully keep in mind the great spiritual benefits of the Three Treasures, and, whether asleep or awake, we should respectfully call upon the Three Treasures. For instance, during the interval between abandoning this life and not yet taking up the next life, there is what we call 'the intermediate existence'. That existence lasts for seven days, during which we should keep in mind to

respectfully call upon the Three Treasures, without our voice ever ceasing. When the seven days have passed, we are said to die within that intermediate world and then receive another body for seven days within that same world. However long this next existence may be, it does not surpass another seven days. At this time, one sees and hears absolutely everything perfectly, without restrictions, just as it is with our spiritual Eye. At such a time, we should diligently apply our mind and respectfully call upon the Three Treasures, mindfully and ceaselessly reciting:

I take refuge in the Buddha,
I take refuge in the Dharma,
I take refuge in the Sangha.

When we have passed beyond the intermediate world, we draw near to a father and mother, readying ourselves bit-by-bit through Right Knowledge to entrust ourselves to a womb. Even when we are within the Treasure House of the Womb,[1] we should reverently call upon the Three Treasures. Even while we are being born, we should not neglect to reverently call upon Them. It should be our most profound wish that, through our six senses, we may reverently make alms offerings to the Three Treasures, call upon Them, and take refuge in Them.

Also, when this life of ours is coming to an end, our two eyes may suddenly become dark. At such a time, knowing that the end of our life has come, we should strive to recite the Refuges: "I take refuge in the Buddha…" and so forth. At this time, all the Buddhas in the ten quarters will have pity on us so that, due to contributing causes, even wrongdoings for which we should face being reborn in one of the three lower worlds of existence[2] are reversed, and we are instead reborn in some celestial world or reborn before the presence of the Buddha, where we may reverently pay homage to Him and hear Him give voice to the Dharma.

After darkness has come before our eyes, we should, right off, strive to recite the Three Refuges, not shirking from this even during our entering the intermediate world or our next birth. In this way, we should thoroughly expend life after life and, in age after age, reverently recite Them. We should not let up even upon arriving at the Wisdom that is the fruition of Buddhahood. This is the Path that all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas* pursue. We call this 'the profound awakening to the

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1. The 'Treasure House of the Womb' is a translation of the Japanese term *Nyoraizō,* (S. *Tathāgata-garbha*), which points to the inherent Buddha Nature in all living beings and, consequently, to their potential to realize Buddhahood.

2. That is, the worlds of hellish beings, hungry ghosts, and beasts.

* See *Glossary.*

Law' and 'the Buddha's Truth inherent in every being'. Further, you must pray that you do not dilute this with opinions held by others.

Also, within your lifetime you should engage yourself in making yourself into a Buddha, and, in cultivating Buddhahood, you should offer the Buddha three sorts of alms. These three are a meditation cushion, a vessel for holding sweet water, and a light whereby to illumine one's Original Nature. These are what you should make as your alms offering.

Also, during your lifetime you should make a copy of the *Lotus Scripture*. You should reverently write It down and make a copy of It for you to retain. You should continually make It as if a crown upon your head and bow in reverence to It, worshipfully making offerings of flowers, incense, candles, food, and robes. With the crown of our head always cleansed, we should offer these alms upon the crown of our head.[3]

Also, continually put on your kesa* and sit in meditation. There are examples from the past of someone realizing the Truth in a third lifetime as the result of putting on a kesa.[4] It is already the garb of all Buddhas in the three temporal worlds. Its meritorious virtue is unfathomable. Doing seated meditation is not the method of those in the three worlds of desire, form, and beyond form; it is the method of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

3. This is done by holding the offering with both hands and raising it above the crown of the head, not by literally placing it atop the head.

4. Dōgen gives an example of this in Discourse 84: On the Spiritual Merits of the Kesa *(Kesa Kudoku)*, concerning a prostitute who once put on a kesa as a joke and, as a result, in a later life became a female monastic.

95

On 'Each Buddha on His Own, Together with All Buddhas'

(Yui Butsu Yo Butsu)

Translator's Introduction: The title of this text is a phrase that Dogen often employs. It is derived from a verse in the *Lotus Scripture:* "Each Buddha on His own, together with all Buddhas, is directly able to fully realize the real form of all thoughts and things."

The Buddha Dharma is something that ordinary people cannot recognize. For this reason, from olden times, worldly people did not awaken to the Buddha Dharma, nor did those of the two Lesser Courses* thoroughly explore It. Because It was realized by the Buddha all by Himself, He said that each Buddha on His own, together with all Buddhas, has been directly able to fully realize It.

When you have thoroughly awakened in spite of yourself, it will be nothing like what you thought it would be before you had awakened. In whatever way you may have imagined it would be, what you awaken to will not at all resemble what you had imagined, for actual awakening bears no resemblance to what one may imagine it to be. Thus, it is useless to try to imagine what it is like beforehand.

When you have your awakening, you will not know why it has come about as it has. Should you reflect upon this, you will see that, prior to your awakening, whatever you thought it would be like is neither here nor there when actually experiencing an awakening. And even though it will be different from all the various ways that you may have previously thought, this does not mean that those views are fundamentally wrong and have played no part in your awakening. Even your past views comprised an awakening of sorts. However, because your thinking has been topsy-turvy, you may think that such views have been useless, and you may speak of them as being so. Whenever you think that your views are useless, there is something that you need to recognize: namely, that you are afraid that an awakening will be overpowering. If your previous ideas about enlightenment could bring forth a true awakening, then you may feel that your realization is unreliable.[1] Since genuine enlightenment does not depend on some special capability and goes far beyond the time prior to your realization, your awakening is assisted simply by

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* See *Glossary.*

1. Because those ideas did not produce an awakening when you first had them.

the innate power of realization. Keep in mind that delusion is something that has no physical existence, and keep in mind that enlightenment is also something that has no physical existence!

Whenever there is a person of unsurpassed enlightenment, we call such a one 'a Buddha'. When the unsurpassed enlightenment of a Buddha arises, we call this state 'unsurpassed enlightenment'. Those who do not recognize how someone looks at the time of his or her being in such a state must surely be befuddled. This so-called 'look' is that of being untainted. 'Being untainted' does not mean being deliberately devoid of any purpose or refusing to make choices, nor is it being compulsively preoccupied with trying to be aimless or glossing over everything. How could there possibly be an untainted state in which someone is devoid of any purpose and refuses to make choices! For instance, upon meeting someone, the untainted person does not bring to mind judgmental thoughts concerning just how that other person looks. And with both flowers and the moon, such a one does not think of adding anything to their present brightness and color. Such a one does not attempt to evade the feelings that a spring day is spring just as it is, or that the beauty or dreariness of an autumn day is autumn just as it is, and he or she will be aware that this is not to be taken as being separate from himself, or even as being part and parcel of himself. But such a one may reflect upon the sounds of spring and autumn as being part of himself or as being separate from himself. And there is nothing that such a one is adding to himself nor does he have any thought that even now he still has a self. This means that such a one will not see the four elements* and the five skandhas* of the present as himself, nor will he trace them back to someone else. Hence, we should not treat the images in the mind which are evoked by flowers and moon as being ourself, though we are prone to do so. If we consider that which is not ourself to be our self, well then, we do so, but when we illumine the condition where there is no color that repels us nor any that attracts us, then our everyday behavior as monks who have realized the Way conceals nothing, for this is what our original Buddha Nature is.

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A person of olden times, Meditation Master Chōsa Keishin, once said the following:

> The whole of the great earth is our own Dharma Body, but we may not be clear about the term 'Dharma Body'.[2] If you are not clear

2. 'The Dharma Body' refers to our True Being.

> about what the Dharma Body is, it will be impossible for you to turn yourself around even ever so slightly.[3] And still, there will be a way of extricating yourself. And what is the way whereby people extricate themselves?[4]

For those who may fail to express what this way of extricating themselves is, the very life of the Dharma Body will immediately cease to exist for them, and they will sink down into the sea of suffering for ever so long. Were the question raised like this, how would you respond so that you would keep your Dharma Body alive and not sink into the sea of suffering? At such a time you should say something to express that the whole of the great earth is your very Dharma Body. If what you offer is indeed this fundamental principle, then at the very moment when you would say, "The whole of the great earth is my very Dharma Body," you would do well not to speak. And also, at the time when you would be silent, you may get to the heart of what goes beyond words.

A monk of ancient times, who remarked that he did not say what went beyond saying, once commented, "In death there are occasions when one may be truly alive, and in life there are occasions when one may be truly dead; and there are those who are dead and are continually dead, and there are those who are alive and are continually alive." This is not a case where an ordinary person is trying to force things to be a certain way; it is precisely what accords with the Dharma. Thus, on the occasion when the Buddha turned the Wheel of the Dharma, He had such a glow from It, and such a voice for It, that you could recognize that He came into bodily form in order to aid all sentient beings. We call this His wise discernment that sees beyond birth and decay.

'His coming into bodily form in order to aid all sentient beings' means that His aiding all sentient beings is His manifesting what His Body is. When we focus on His giving aid, we do not call to mind His coming into bodily form, and when we see His coming into bodily form, we harbor no doubts as to His giving aid. You need to comprehend that the Buddha Dharma is being fully realized in His giving spiritual aid, and then you need to give expression to this and fully experience it. Pay attention and give expression to His act of manifesting and to His bodily form, for they are in no way different from His giving aid. All this stems from the fact

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3. 'Turning oneself around' translates a technical Buddhist term, which means 'relinquishing one's delusions and defiling passions, and thereby realizing enlightenment'.

4. The last sentence can also be taken to be a declarative statement: "And the What is the Way whereby people extricate themselves."

that the Buddha manifested His bodily form in order to aid all sentient beings. In His fully actualizing this purpose from the dawning of His realization of the Truth to the evening of His entering parinirvana, His expressing the Truth would have been freely given, even if He had not spoken a word.

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The Old Buddha, Meditation Master Chōsa, once said in verse:

The whole of the great earth is the Body of a True Human Being,
The whole of the great earth is the gateway to liberation,
*The whole of the great earth is the Solitary Eye of Vairochana,**
The whole of the great earth is our own Dharma Body.

In other words, what we are calling real is, in essence, our True Being. You need to realize that 'the whole of the great earth' is not some provisional term, for our being is its true form. If someone were to ask you, "Why have I never known this before?" say to that one, "Give me back my words, 'The whole of the great earth is my own True Body.'" Or tell that person to say, "The whole of the great earth is the real Human Being," even though this is something he already knows.

Also, what is described as "The whole of the great earth is the gateway to liberation" means that there is nothing to get entangled with or to embrace. The phrase 'the whole of the great earth' is closely connected with the moment and with the years, with the mind and with its expressions, and so intimately are they related that there is not the slightest gap between any of them.[5] What is unbounded and extends far out beyond us is what we should call 'the whole of the great earth'. Should you seek to enter this gateway to liberation or to come out on the other side of it, this would not be possible. And why is that so? We need to reflect on whence springs the question. However much we might desire to visit a place that does not exist, that would be impossible to do.[6]

Also, when it comes to "The whole of the great earth is the Solitary Eye of Vairochana," we may speak of the One Eye of the Buddha, but do not think that It must be just like the eye of a human being. People have two eyes, so when we speak of eyes, we are just talking about human beings and we do not speak of their having two or three. What we are being taught here is spoken of as being the Eye

5. That is, what physically exists is inseparable from time and mind.

6. That is, enlightenment is not a place and, in that sense, is not something to be reached.

of Buddha, or the Eye of the Dharma, or the All-seeing Celestial Eye, and so forth. You are not learning about ordinary eyes. To understand It as being an ordinary eye is hopeless. What you need to learn now is that the Eye of the Buddha is solitary and that the whole of the great earth is contained within It. There may be a thousand eyes or myriad eyes, but first of all the whole of the great earth is the One among them. There is nothing wrong in saying that it is the One among so many, and at the same time, you would not be mistaken in realizing that a Buddha has just one, solitary Eye. Eyes may be of various kinds, so it should come as no surprise to our ears when we hear that there are occasions when there are three Eyes, and occasions when there are a thousand Eyes, and occasions when there are eighty-four thousand Eyes.[7]

Also, you need to hear that the whole of the great earth is your own Dharma Body. That which seeks to know what we truly are is the resolute heart of someone who is truly alive. Even so, those who see what their True Self is are few. Only a Buddha alone knows this Self. Others who are off the Path, such as non-Buddhists, vainly take their unreal, false self to be their True Self. The Self that Buddhas speak of is synonymous with the whole of the great earth. Thus, whether we know or do not know our True Self, in either case, there is no 'whole of the great earth' that is other than our True Self.

But let us leave to those of other times what we are talking about at this moment.

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> Long ago, there was a novice monk who asked the Venerable Abbot Hōju Chinshu, "When a hundred thousand myriad conditions come at me all at one time, what should I do about them?"
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> The Venerable One responded, "Do not try to control them."

The essence of what Chinshū is saying is "Let come what may. In any event, you cannot influence what comes." This is on-the-spot Buddha Dharma. It is not about conditions. You should not understand these words as being a rebuke, but understand them as sheer Truth. Even if you were to consider how you might control conditions, they are beyond being controlled.

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7. The Three Eyes are an awakened person's two conventional eyes plus the opened spiritual Third Eye. The Thousand Eyes are those associated with the Thousand-armed Kanzeon, who is the manifestation of the all-seeing, all-helping Compassion inherent in Buddha Nature. The Eighty-four Thousand Eyes are those that a Buddha has for seeing through the eighty-four thousand forms of delusion.

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An Old Buddha once said:

> The whole earth with its mountains and rivers has come into being in much the same way that we human beings have. The Buddhas of the three temporal worlds of past, present, and future have customarily done a practice that is the same as the practice that we ordinary human beings do.

Thus, on the occasion of someone's being born, when we look at the whole earth with its mountains and rivers, what we do not see is that person's being born has now added another layer upon the whole earth of mountains and rivers that existed before he or she was born. Having said this does not mean that his words may not have a deeper meaning. So, how can it be understood? If you do not give up by saying, "I can't understand this," then by all means, you will be able to understand, for you will be able to ask about it. Since they are words that have already been voiced by a Buddha, you should listen to them, and by having listened, you may also come to understand them.

One way that you may come to understand them is to inquire from the perspective of someone who has been born, "What is this 'being alive?'" Who of us has clarified from beginning to end what it is? Though we do not know our end or our beginning, even so, we have come to be alive. Well, it is like our seeing the great earth with its mountain and rivers and treading upon it, even though we do not know its limits. Do not be argumentative, holding to the opinion that the great earth with its mountains and rivers is in no way like our life. You need to be clear about His having said that the great earth with its mountains and rivers is exactly the same as our being alive.

Further, the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds have already done the practice, completed the Way, and fully awakened Themselves. How, then, are we to understand this notion of the Buddhas being the same as us? Well, first off, we need to understand what the practice of a Buddha is. The practice of a Buddha is done in the same manner as the practice of the whole earth, and it is done together with all sentient beings. If it were not so, all the practices of the Buddhas would not yet exist. Therefore, from the first arising of one's intention up to the attainment of its realization, beyond any question, both the realizing and the practice are done together with the whole of the great earth and with every single sentient being.

Doubts may arise concerning this, but keep in mind that when we attempt to clarify matters that appear to be all mixed up with issues that are unknowable, the voice of such doubts is heard, so do not be skeptical about the arising of doubts

being the way it is with ordinary humans. This is a teaching you need to be aware of, for you need to know that when we give rise to the intention that the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds hold to, there is invariably the underlying principle that we do not exclude our own body and mind.

However, to deliberately harbor doubts about this is already a defaming of the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds. When we tranquilly reflect upon this, the principle that our body and mind are behaving exactly like that of the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds, as well as the principle that we are giving rise to the intention to realize Buddhahood, will both be apparent. If, in reflecting, we shed light upon the before and after of this body and mind of ours, the One we will be searching for is beyond an 'I' and beyond an ordinary, mundane person. So, do not be rigid in your thinking and do not believe that you have stagnated and are therefore separated from the three temporal worlds. Such thoughts, however, do not belong to you. When the Original Mind of the Buddhas of the three temporal worlds is practicing the Way, what could possibly come from left field to turn It aside? In short, the Way should be called, 'That which goes beyond intellectual knowing and not knowing'.

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One of old once said in verse:

Even what we cast aside is nothing other than the Body of the Dharma Lord;[8]
That It permeates the three temporal worlds is beyond dispute.
The mountains and rivers, along with the great earth itself,
Completely reveal the Dharma Body of the Awakened Lord.

We people today should learn from what this person of old said. Since everything is already the Body of the Dharma Lord, there appeared a Lord of Dharma who understood that there is nothing different from the Body of the Dharma Lord. This Mind of His is like a mountain upon the earth and resembles the earth holding up mountains.

Once you have arrived at the heart of the Matter,* the time when you did not understand will not have impeded your arrival. Further, getting to the heart of the

8. 'To cast aside' is synonymous with Dōgen's 'to drop off body and mind'.

Matter has not changed the fact that, previously, you did not understand. Even so, in your getting to the heart of the Matter and in your previous non-understanding, there have been the times of spring and the sounds of autumn. The reason why you have not understood even these is because your ears have been wandering about within their voices, despite the fact that they have been giving expression to It ever so loudly. As a result, their voices have not entered your ears. Your getting to the heart of the Matter will occur when their voices have penetrated your ears and you have entered a meditative state. Do not fancy that your having arrived at the heart of the Matter is of little importance and that your non-understanding was something large. You need to realize that because you will be beyond what you conceived of as being 'you', you will not be different from the Lord of Dharma.

As to the meaning of 'the Body of the Dharma Lord', the Eye is like the Heart of It, and the Heart of It will be like the Body. Not a single hair separates the Heart from the Body, for They will be fully revealed. You will understand that within the brightness of the Light and within giving expression to the Dharma, there exists the Body of the Dharma Lord as just described.

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There is a saying from olden days, "If you are not a fish, you do not know what is in the mind of a fish, and if you are not a bird, you do not know how to follow the traces of birds." People who have been able to grasp the principle of this are rare indeed. Those who fancy that this simply means that humans do not know what the mind of a fish or the mind of a bird is have misunderstood it. The following is the way to understand this. A fish together with other fish invariably know what is on each other's mind. Unlike humans, they are not ignorant of each other's intentions, so that when they are about to swim upstream through the Dragon's Gate, they all know this and they all alike make their intention as one.[9] And when they are about to swim through the nine rapids of Chekiang, again they all know this and make their intention as one, but it is only the fish that know what this intention is.

Also, when birds are flying through the sky, no beast on the ground, even in its wildest imaginings, knows what the traces of their tracks are, much less sees and follows them. Such a beast does not have even an inkling that such tracks exist. At the same time, a bird can see the various ways a swarm of hundreds of

9. It is said that when a fish swims up through the rapids of the Dragon's Gate at Chekiang, it is transformed into a dragon. This has been used in Zen Buddhist texts as a metaphor for someone like Prince Siddhārtha becoming a Buddha, together with all other beings.

thousands of small birds have flown off, or see the traces of birds that have flown south or north. For birds, these traces are no more hidden than the tracks left on a path by a cart or than the hoofprints of horses seen on grass, since birds see the traces of birds.

This principle also applies to Buddhas. It is apparent to Them how many eons a Buddha has spent in training, and They know who is a small Buddha and who a large Buddha, even among Those who have gone uncounted. This is something that cannot possibly be known when someone is not yet a Buddha. And there may be someone who asks, "And why, pray, can I not know it?" Well, since it is with the Eye of a Buddha that someone sees the traces of a Buddha, one who is not a Buddha is not yet in possession of the Eye of a Buddha. The number of those who can see are a number that only a Buddha can count. Without realizing it, They have all been able to follow the traces of the Buddha's Path. If these traces are visible to your Eye, you are undoubtedly in the presence of Buddhas and will be able to compare Their footprints with those of others. In making that comparison, you will be able to recognize the traces of a Buddha, as well as the magnitude and depth of the traces that that Buddha has left, and, through consideration of that Buddha's traces, your own traces will become clear to you. When we learn what these traces of a Buddha are, we call them the Buddha Dharma, that is, our True Self.

Copied at the end of the last month of spring in the eleventh year of the Kōan era (May 1, 1288), while staying in Shibi Manor, the Guestmaster's southern quarters at Eihei-ji Temple on Mount Kippō in the Yoshida district of Echizen Province.

96

On the Eight Realizations of a Great One

(Hachi Dainingaku)

Translator's introduction: According to the postscript, this text was the last that Dōgen prepared before his death. It consists mainly of passages from the *Scripture of the Buddha's Last Teachings*.[1]

The term 'a Great One' refers not only to a Buddha, but also to virtuous monks and bodhisattvas. The term 'realization' refers not only to an intellectual understanding, but also to the act of putting the Teachings into practice, that is, making Them real.

All Buddhas are enlightened people, and because of this, we call what They discern 'the eight realizations of a Great One'. When someone discerns what this Dharma of Theirs is, It brings about nirvana, which is freedom from suffering. On the night when our Shakyamuni Buddha entered nirvana, He gave these eight realizations as part of His final Teaching.

The first is 'having few desires'. What He called 'having few desires' means not chasing far and wide among those objects of the five senses which one has not yet experienced. As the Buddha said:

> O you monks, recognize the person who has many cravings. His misery and troubles are many because he seeks for many benefits, gains, and advantages. The person of few cravings is free from seeking after things or yearning for them. Hence, he is free of such sufferings. He desires little, only esteeming what is fitting for his spiritual training and practice. By desiring little, so much more is he able to bring forth fine merits and virtues. The person of few desires is free of flattery and fawning when searching out the intentions of others. The heart of someone who behaves with few desires is, as a consequence, even-tempered and free from gloom, anxiety, sorrow, or fear. When coming in contact with things, he finds a surplus, for he knows no insufficiency. The one who has few desires experiences nirvana, for this is the name for 'having few desires'.

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1. One translation of this is found in *Buddhist Writings on Meditation and Daily Practice,* (Shasta Abbey Press, 1994), pp. 247-260.

The second is ‘being content’. What He called ‘being content’ means limiting what you take to those things that you already have available to you. As the Buddha said:

> O you monks, if you wish to be free from miseries and woes, look into contentment, which is synonymous with knowing what is enough. The Teaching of contentment is none other than the location of true wealth, ease, security, and peace. The person who is contented, though he sleeps upon the bare ground, is still at ease and satisfied. Someone who is discontented, even if he were ensconced in a celestial palace would still not find this tallying with his ideas and tastes. The one who is discontented, though rich, is poor. The person who is contented, though poor, is rich. The one who is discontented always does what his five desires latch onto. He does that which causes grief to, and arouses the compassionate pity of, one who is contented. This is what I mean by ‘being content’.

The third is ‘enjoying the tranquility of nirvana’. What He called ‘enjoying the tranquility of nirvana’ means leaving behind all the noise and hubbub for the solitude of the open country. As the Buddha said:

> O you monks, if you seek to be tranquil and quiet, liberated from the insistence of the defiling passions, at ease and content, then you should part company with confusion and bustle, and dwell at your ease in some solitary place. The person who dwells in quietude continually forsakes what those in the heavens esteem so highly amongst themselves. Therefore, withdraw from those about you, as well as from other crowds and, in a place of solitude apart from them, reflect on the source of the eradication of suffering at your leisure. If you are one who enjoys the company of others, then you will take on the woes of their company, just as with a flock of birds that gather in some huge tree, there is the lament of dead branches breaking off under their weight. When the world binds itself around us, we drown in the suffering of such company just as an old elephant, sunk down in mire, is unable to drag himself out. This is what I call ‘distancing yourself from those about you’.

The fourth is ‘being devoted to progress’. He called this ‘being devoted to progress’ because of His ceaseless devotion to performing good acts—a devotion undiluted and a progression without regressing. As the Buddha said:

> O you monks, if you are diligent in your devotion to progress, training will not be difficult for you. Therefore, be diligent and devote yourselves to progress, just as a small stream, ever flowing, can bore holes in rocks. If the mind of the trainee is often inattentive and remiss, it will be just the same as making a fire by friction and blowing on it before it is hot enough to catch fire. Although your desire to train can blaze up, the fires of training are hard to arrive at. This is what I call 'being devoted to progress'.

The fifth is 'not neglecting mindfulness'. He also called it 'keeping to Right Mindfulness'. What He called 'keeping to the Dharma without losing sight of It' means keeping to Right Mindfulness. It is also called 'not forgetting to be mindful'. As the Buddha said:

> O you monks, seek fine understanding, search out good assistance, and do not neglect mindfulness. If you are one who does not neglect mindfulness, the thieves of passional defilement will not be able to enter. Therefore, you monks, always keep your minds alert, for the one who loses his mindfulness loses his merits and virtues. When the strength of your mindfulness is constant and vigorous, though the five desires would break in to rob you, they will do you no harm. You will be as one who puts on armor before entering a battle and will have nothing to fear. This is what I call 'not neglecting mindfulness'.

The sixth is 'doing meditation'. What He called 'doing meditation' means abiding in the Dharma undisturbed. As the Buddha said:

> O you monks, when your mind is kept alert, then you are in meditation. Because your mind is in meditation, you are able to know the world, birth and death, as well as the characteristics of all things. Therefore, you monks should always study and practice the ways of meditation with finest diligence. When you achieve meditation, your heart is not in turmoil or your mind scattered. Just as a household that would be frugal with water arranges dikes and pond banks carefully, so a trainee does similarly. Therefore, for the sake of the water of discriminate wisdom, practice meditation well that you may prevent the loss of that water through leaks caused by the defiling passions. This is what I call 'doing meditation'.

The seventh is employing ‘wise discernment’. What He called employing wise discernment means letting one’s hearing, thinking, and practice naturally arise from one’s realization of Truth. As the Buddha said:

> O you monks, when you have wise discernment, you will not be attached to desires. By constant self-reflection and watching what you do, you will not bring about any loss through the defiling passions. Within My Teachings, this is what can bring you to liberation. If someone denies this, not only is he not a person of the Way, he is also not an ordinary, everyday person either. Indeed, there is no name for such a one. Genuine wise discernment is the sturdy craft that ferries others across the sea of old age, disease, and death. It is also a great, bright lamp for the darkness of ignorance, a wonderful curative for all disease and suffering. It is a sharp axe for felling the trees of defiling passions. Therefore, you monks should improve yourselves by means of this wise discernment, which you attain through hearing, thinking about, and putting into practice My Teachings. When someone has the radiance of this wisdom then, though he be blind, he will clearly see what people are. This is what ‘wise discernment’ is.

The eighth is ‘not playing around with theories and opinions’. What He called ‘not playing around with theories and opinions’ means letting go of dualities and judgmentalism that one may experience. Fully realizing the True Nature of all things is what ‘not playing around with theories and opinions’ means. As the Buddha said:

> O you monks, if your mind plays around with all kinds of theories and opinions, it will be confused and in disorder and, though you have left home to become a monk, you have still not realized liberation. Therefore, O monks, quickly abandon your disordered mind and your playing around with your theories and notions. If you wish to enjoy the pleasure that comes from calmness and the extinction of defiling passions, thoroughly eliminate the affliction of playing around in your head. This is what I mean by ‘not playing around with theories and opinions’.

These are the eight realizations of a Great One. Each and every Great One is equipped with all eight. When extended, they are immeasurable; when abbreviated,

they are sixty-four.[2] They are our Great Master Shakyamuni's final voicing of the Dharma, His last instructions on the Great Course, His ultimate song in the middle of the night on the fifteenth of the second lunar month. After speaking the following, He did not give voice to the Dharma again, and at last, entered His parinirvana.

> O you monks, with wholehearted devotion always seek to get back on the path. Everything in all worlds, both the movable and the immovable, works to defeat and destroy all signs of uncertainty. Cease for a moment and do not ask Me to say more, for the time is nigh when I would pass and I wish for my parinirvana. These are My last Teachings and instructions.

Therefore, disciples of the Tathagata, by all means, set yourself to study these instructions of His and do not neglect to study them, for if you do not know them, you are not a disciple of the Buddha. These are the very Treasure House of the Eye of the True Teaching, which is the Wondrous Heart of Nirvana.

Even so, there are many today who do not know them, for there are few who have encountered or heard of them. That they do not know them is due to devilish disturbances. Those who have planted few good spiritual roots have also not heard or encountered them. During the long past days of the genuine Dharma and the superficial Dharma, disciples of the Buddha knew them, studied them, and explored them through their training with their Master. Nowadays only one or two among a thousand monks know the "Eight Realizations of a Great One". Sad to say, there is nothing to compare to the degeneration of the Dharma in these decadent times of ours. While the Tathagata's True Dharma is still circulating in the great-thousandfold world and His immaculate Dharma has not yet disappeared, you should hasten to learn It. Do not be slack and neglect It.

To encounter the Buddha's Dharma is difficult even in immeasurable eons. To obtain a human body is also difficult. And even if you do obtain a human body, to obtain a human body on one of the three continents is better.[3] Among these

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2. These two sentences that begin Dōgen's commentary are interpolations in the manuscript. 'When extended' means that there are innumerable ways in which these eight may be realized. 'The sixty-four' means that each of the eight may be coupled with each of the eight, that is, for example, one should keep to mindfulness when doing any of the eight, including keeping to mindfulness.

3. A reference to three of the four continents said to lie around Mount Sumeru. Of these three, the southern continent of Jambudvipa is considered the most favorable, since those born there can more readily experience the transiency of human life. The fourth continent is a

three, being a human on the southern continent is best, because there one can encounter Buddha, hear the Dharma, leave home life behind to become a monk, and realize the Way. Those who died prior to the Tathagata's entering His parinirvana had not heard of the eight realizations of a Great One, much less studied them. That you now have encountered and heard of them, and are studying them, is due to the strength of the good roots you planted in the past. In your studying them now, in your developing them in life after life and thereby arriving, without fail, at the supreme awakening to Truth, and in your giving expression to them for the sake of sentient beings, you may well be the equal of Shakyamuni Buddha. May there be no difference between the two of you.

Written at Eihei-ji Temple on the sixth day of the first lunar month in the fifth year of the Kenchō era (February 5, 1253).[4]

Now, on the day before the end of the summer retreat in the seventh year of the Kenchō era (August 3, 1255), I had my clerical officer Gien finish copying this text.[5] *At the same time, I have proofed his copy.*

This was our Master's last discourse, drafted when he was already ill. Among other things, I heard him say that he wanted to rework all of the Shōbōgenzō *that had previously been written in Japanese script*[6] *and also to include some new manuscripts, so that he would be able to compile a work consisting altogether of one hundred discourses.*

This present discourse, which was a first draft, was to be the twelfth of the new ones. After this our Master's illness worsened. As a result, he stopped working on such things as the drafts. Therefore, this draft is our late Master's final teaching for us. Unfortunately, we will never see His full draft of the hundred chapters, which is something to be greatly regretted. Those who love and miss our late Master should, by all means, make copies of this twelfth chapter, and take care to preserve it. It contains the final instructions of our Venerable Shakyamuni and is the final legacy of our late Master's Teaching.

I, Ejō, have given this final account.

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place where beings are enjoying too much bliss to be willing to listen to the Buddha's Teaching.

4. Dōgen is said to have died on August 28, 1253.

5. Gien began his training under Dōgen. Upon the latter's death, he trained with Kōun Ejō, ultimately becoming one of his Dharma heirs and the Fourth Abbot of Eihei-ji.

6. As distinct from his collection of three hundred kōan stories, which were written in Chinese and are without any commentary. That collection is called Dōgen's *Chinese Shinji Shōbōgenzō.*

Glossary

Āchārya: Sanskrit for 'teacher'; in Zen monasteries, a polite form of address for a monk with at least five years of training; applied to a disciple advanced enough to teach monks and laity, but not yet deemed a Master.

Arhat: In Zen, one whose heart is cleansed of all greed, hatred, and delusion but who has not yet fully realized wise discernment or compassion.

Asura: An inhabitant of one of the six Worlds of Existence; before conversion, a heaven stormer, one who is so absorbed in attaining power that he cannot hear the Dharma, much less comprehend It; after conversion, he becomes a guardian of Buddhism.

Avalokiteshvara (C. Kuan Yin, J. Kanzeon or Kannon): The Bodhisattva who hearkens to the cries of the world; the embodiment of compassion.

Before 'father' and 'mother' were born: That is, the time before dualistic thinking arises in the mind.

Bodhisattva: When not capitalized, it refers to one who is attempting to follow the Mahāyāna (Greater Course) as the Buddha Path; when capitalized, the personification of some aspect of Buddha Nature.

A broken wooden ladle: A Zen metaphor describing someone's mind which has become free of discriminatory thinking.

A dragon elephant: Originally, a term for a particularly large elephant; used in Zen texts to describe a particularly brilliant and discerning Master.

The five treacherous deeds: Murdering one's father, murdering one's mother, murdering an arhat, spilling the blood of someone who has realized Buddhahood, and causing disharmony in the Sangha, thereby creating a schism in the order.

The four elements: Earth, water, fire, and wind.

The four stages of arhathood: (1) Stream-enterer: someone who enters into the stream of Buddhist training by abandoning false views; (2) Once-returner: someone having one more rebirth before realizing full enlightenment; (3) Non-returner: someone never returning to the realm of sensual desire; and (4) Arhat: someone who has reached a state of enlightenment and is therefore free from all defiling passions.

Gasshō: A gesture made by placing the palms of the hands together, with fingers pointing upwards, signifying the unity of body and mind. It is an expression of reverence often used during ceremonies, as well as a form of greeting when two Buddhists meet and a gesture of supplication.

Greater Course (Greater Vehicle): A translation of the term 'Mahāyāna', used to designate the Buddhist traditions that place the awakening of all sentient beings above one's personal awakening.

Hossu: A scepter-like instrument in the form of a fly-whisk carried by a celebrant during ceremonies. It represents the flowing forth of the Water of the Spirit as an expression of the celebrant's compassion.

Hungry ghost (preta): One who resides in one of the three negative modes of existence, pictured as a being who is suffering from a hunger for the Dharma and has some metaphorical deformity, such as lacking a mouth, which makes it impossible to absorb It.

Icchantika: Someone who is erroneously thought to be so amoral as to be completely devoid of Buddha Nature. In Zen, there is reference to the Great Icchantika, which is an epithet for Buddha Nature itself.

Jambudvipa: In Buddhist spiritual cosmology, the Southern Continent where people are capable of doing Buddhist training.

Kalpa: An endlessly long period of time, roughly equivalent to an eon.

Karma: What results from any volitional action, according to the universal law of cause and effect.

Kenshō: The experience of seeing into one's true nature, that is, one's Buddha Nature.

Kesa: A cloak-like robe traditionally worn by Buddhist monastics since the time of Shakyamuni Buddha. A similar type of robe is given to committed lay Buddhists.

Kōan: A statement or story used by a Zen Master as a teaching device to directly address a trainee's spiritual question; also may be used to refer to that question itself.

Lantern (stone or temple): A term often used metaphorically for a monk who stays in a monastery or temple, serving as a light to help guide a trainee.

Lesser Course: Followers of the two 'lesser' courses, namely, the shravakas and the pratyekabuddhas. They are not 'wrong' practitioners of Buddhism, but by their following a 'lesser' course it will take a longer time for their spiritual seeds to germinate and grow into the realizing of Buddhahood, since they have not yet entered the Bodhisattva Path, which involves the doing of one's practice for the sake of all sentient beings. See also the Greater Course and the Three Vehicles.

Lion Throne (Lion's Seat): The seat where a Master sits when giving a talk on some aspect of the Dharma.

Lord of Emptiness: The first of the Seven Buddhas, the one who lived during the Age of Emptiness, that is, before duality had first arisen.

Mahāsattva: An outstanding bodhisattva.

Mahāyāna: The Greater Vehicle.

Maitreya: The Buddha Yet to Come. He is said to be waiting as a Bodhisattva in the Tushita Heaven. To realize one's own Buddha Nature brings Maitreya forth.

Manjushri: The Bodhisattva who personifies Great Wisdom.

Matter (the One Great Matter): The goal of spiritual training, namely, the realization of the highest Truth**.**

Monjin: The act of bowing from the waist with hands in gasshō.

A pillar of the temple: A monk whose training is so strong that it supports the spiritual function of the temple or monastery in which he trains.

Pratyekabuddha: One who becomes enlightened as a result of his own efforts but does not share his understanding with others.

Samantabhadra: The Bodhisattva who is the embodiment of patient, loving activity.

Seal (Buddha seal, Buddha Mind seal, Dharma seal, and seal of certification): 'The Buddha Mind Seal' refers not only to the document written on plum blossom silk which certifies both the Master's and the disciple's Buddha Mind but also to the fact that the Minds of Master and disciple coincide and are not two separate minds. The Transmission of this seal is often referred to in Zen texts as 'the Transmission of Mind to Mind' as well as 'the special Transmission that is apart from Scriptural texts and which does not depend on words'.

The Seven Buddhas: The historical Buddha and the six Buddhas that preceded Him.

The seven treasures (the seven jewels): The seven types of jewels from which Pure Lands are fashioned.

Shashu: The way that the hands are held when doing walking meditation. There are various forms of shashu, but most involve one hand being wrapped around the fist of the other.

Shravaka: One who, upon hearing the Dharma, affirms his allegiance to It but may not yet try to put It into practice, or may try to reduce It simply to a rigid code of 'right' or 'wrong' behaviors.

The six Worlds of Existence: Those of celestial beings, humans, asuras, hungry ghosts, beasts, and those in hellish states.

Skandhas: The five skandhas comprising a living being's physical form, sensory perceptions, mental concepts and ideas, volition, and consciousness.

Skin bag: An allusion to a human as a sentient being having a physical body. Dōgen often uses the term to characterize ineffectual trainees.

Staff: The traveling staff carried by a monk when traveling to another temple. Hence the phrase 'to hang up one's traveling staff' meaning 'to have found the temple in which to permanently seek the Truth under the abbot'; metaphorically, a monk who is willing to go anywhere in order to spread the Dharma and help all sentient beings.

Stupa: Literally, a reliquary for the ashes of a Buddhist, and metaphorically, the body of a Buddha.

'Such a one' ('such a person'): Someone who has realized the Truth and automatically shows the signs of having had such a realization.

The Three Courses (the Three Vehicles): Namely, the way of training done by the shravakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas.

The thrice wise and ten times saintly: Those who have attained the final stage of bodhisattvahood before fully awakening and becoming a Buddha.

The tiles and stones of our walls and fences: The bits and pieces of our experiences, which we use to fashion our perception of the universe.

Tripitaka: The three divisions of Buddhist Scriptures, namely, the Buddha's Teachings (Sutras), the Precepts (Vinaya), and the commentaries on the Sutras (Abhidharmas); also, the whole of the Buddhist canon.

Vairochana (the Cosmic Buddha): The Buddha who is the personification of spiritual Light and Truth, the one who represents the Pure Buddha Mind.

Vimalakīrti: A wealthy lay Buddhist renowned for his profound understanding of Mahāyāna.

A wheel-turning lord: A ruler who turns the Wheel of the Dharma in his country by governing according to Buddhist principles.

Yojana: An Indian measure of distance, understood by some scholars as equivalent to twelve or sixteen miles.

Appendix of Names

Many of Dōgen's discourses in the *Shōbōgenzō* are based on accounts taken from various collections of kōan stories. For the most part, these deal with notable Zen monastics who are customarily identified in the opening sentence of the story. However, since these stories have come from various sources, the name given for any of these monastics may not always be consistent. All the various names attributed to these monks would have been known to those in Dōgen's assembly but may not all be familiar to modern-day readers. To help in identifying who is who, I have taken the liberty of using the most familiar Japanese name by which these historic monks are known. For instance, Daikan Enō is referred to in the translations as Enō, whereas in some of the original texts he is referred to as Sōkei.

Also, monastic Japanese names that end in *–san* or *–zan* (Ch. *–shan*) may refer to the mountain on which a monastery is built, or to the monastery itself, or to the monk who was the first head of the monastery. Only context can clarify which is intended.

The numbers in parentheses by each name indicate the chapters in which a kōan story or other major reference to the person appears.

Banzan Hōshaku, C. P'an-shan Pao-chi. Zen Master. (27, 43, 82)

Barishiba, S. Pārshva. (29)

Baso Dōitsu, C. Ma-tsu Tao-i. (11, 19, 26, 29, 53, 75)

Bodhidharma, J. Bodaidaruma, C. P'u-t'i-ta-mo. (8, 19, 23, 29, 34, 41, 44, 47, 51, 69)

Bokushū Chin, C. Mu-chou Ch'en. A Dharma heir of Ōbaku.

Busshō Hōtai, C. Fo-hsing Fa-tai. Zen Master under Engo. (64)

Busshō Tokkō, C. Fa-shao Te-kuang. Zen Master under Daie Soko.

Ch'ang Cho, J. Chō Setsu. Lay disciple of Sekisō Keisho. (44)

Chimon Kōso, C. Chih-men Kuang-tso. Zen Master. (27)

Chisō, C. Chih-tsung. (51)

Chōkei Daian, C. Chang-ch'ing Ta-an. Under Hyakujō. (29, 62)

Chōkei Eryō, C. Chang-ch'ing Hui-leng. Under Seppō. (29)

Chōrei Shutaku, C. Chang-ling Shou-cho. Zen Master. (64)

Chōsa Keishin, C. Chang-sha Ching-ts'en. Zen Master. (8, 21, 35, 54, 58, 89, 95)

Daibai Hōjō, C. Ta-mei Fa-Ch'ang. Zen Master. (29)

Daie Sōkō, C. Ta-hui Tsung-kao. Under Engo. (41, 72, 88)

Daigu, J. Kōan Daigu, C. Kao-an Ta-yü. Zen Master.

Daii Dōshin, C. Ta-i Tao-hsin. Zen Master. (21, 29)

Daiji Kanchū, C. Ta-tz'u Huan-chung. Zen Master. (29)

Daikan Enō, C. Ta-chien Hui-neng. Sixth Chinese Ancestor, often known by his posthumous name of Meditation Master Sōkei. (10, 12, 15, 16, 19, 21, 28, 31, 45, 51, 60, 72, 84)

Daiman Kōnin, C. Ta-man Hung-jen. Zen Master. (21, 50)

Daini, Tripitika Master, C. Ta-erh. (18, 78)

Daitaka, S. Dhītika. (82)

Daizui Shinshō, C. Ta-sui Shen-chao. Great Master. (20)

Dōan Dōhi, C. Tung-an Tao-p'i.

Dōgo Enchi, C. Tao-wu Yüan-chih. Zen Master. (27, 32)

Dōrin, J. Chōka Dōrin, C. Niao-k'o Tao-lin. Zen Master. (9)

Echū (National Teacher), J. Nan'yō Echū, C. Nan-yang Hui-chung. (6, 18, 36, 45, 54, 67, 78)

Egaku, C. Hui-chio. Monk. (8)

Eka, J. Taiso Eka, C. Ta-tsu Hui-k'o. (29, 41, 47, 51, 60, 89)

Engo Kokugon, C. Yüan-wu K'o-ch'in. Zen Master. (22, 33, 36, 77, 88)

Enkan Saian, C. Yen-kuan Ch'i-an. National Teacher. (29)

Fuke, J. Chinshū Fuke, C. P'u-hua of Chen-chou. Zen Master. Under Ummon. (21)

Fuyō Dōkai, C. Fu-jung Tao-chieh. (29, 62)

Fuyōzan Reikun, C. Fu-jung Ling-hsün. Zen Master. (44)

Gako, C. E-hu. Disciple of Seppō. (35)

Gantō, J. Gantō Zenkatsu, C. Yen-t'ou Ch'üan-huo.

Gensha Shibi, C. Hsüan-sha Shih-pei. Under Seppō. (4, 18, 19, 22, 23, 29, 31, 48, 49, 60, 78)

Genshi, C. Yüan-tzu. (15)

Gensoku, C. Hsüan-tse. (1)

Gichū, C. I-chung. Zen Master.

Goso Hōen, C. Wu-tsu Fa-yen. Zen Master. (29)

Gozu Hōyū, C. Niu-t'ou Fa-jung. Zen Master. (27)

Gutei, C. Chü-chih. Zen Master. (60)

Haku Rakuten, C. Po Chü-i. Poet of the T'ang Dynasty and a lay disciple of Zen Master Bukkō Nyoman. (9)

Hannyatara, S. Prajñātāra. Bodhidharma's Master. (20, 50)

Haryō Kōkan, C. Pa-ling Hao-chien. Zen Master. (23)

Hō'on, C. P'ang-yün. Lay disciple of Baso. (24)

Hofuku, C. Pao-fu. Disciple of Seppō. (35)

Hōgen, C. Fa-yen. (1, 59)

Hōju Chinshu, C. Chen-chou Pao-shou. Venerable Abbot. (95)

Honei Jin'yū, C. Pao-ning Jen-yung. Zen Master. (59)

Hōtatsu, C. Fa-ta. (16, 20)

Hyakujō Ekai, C. Pai-chang Huai-hai. (21, 24, 29, 33, 62, 73, 74, 76, 88)

Iitsu, C. Wei-i. Retired Abbot.

Isan Reiyū, C. Kuei-shan Ling-yu. Also known as Daii. (8, 21, 24, 29, 62)

Jimyō Soen, C. Tz'u-ming Ch'u-yüan. Zen Master.

Jinshū, C. Shen-hsiu. Chief disciple of Daiman Konin.

Jizō Keichin, C. Ti-tsang Kuei-shen. (35, 48)

Jōshū Shinsai, C. Chao-chou Chen-chi. Great Master. (18, 20, 21, 29, 34, 38, 47, 59, 62, 78, 79)

Kaie Shutan, C. Hai-hui Tuan. Zen Master. (18, 78)

Kanadaiba, S. Kāṇadeva. (21)

Kanchi Sōsan, C. Chien-chih Seng-ts'an. Third Chinese Ancestor.

Kashō Buddha, S. Kāshyapa Buddha. (15, 86)

Kayashata, S. Gayāshata. (19, 28)

Kazan Shujun, C. Ho-shan Shou-hsüen. Zen Master. (64)

Kegon Kyūjō, C. Hua-yen Hsü-ching. (25)

Keichō Beiko, C. Ching-chao Mi-hu. (25)

Kempō, C. Kan-feng. (58)

Kinkazan Kōtō, C. Kung-tao. Zen Master. (19)

Kisei, C. Kuei-hsing. Zen Master. (11)

Kisu Shishin, C. Kuei-tsung Chih-chen. Zen Master. (44)

Koboku Hōjō, C. Ku-mo Fa-cheng. Zen Master. (73)

Kōtō, Vinaya Master, C. Kuang-t'ung.

Kozan Chi'en, C. Ku-shan Chih-yüan.

Kumorata, S. Kumāralabdha. (88, 89)

Kyōgen Chikan, C. Hsiang-yen Chih-hsien. (8, 24, 29, 63, 65, 79)

Kyōsei Dōfu, C. Ching-ch'ing Tao-fu.

Kyōzan Ejaku, C. Yang-shan Hui-chi. Zen Master. Disciple of Isan. (18, 21, 24, 51, 78)

Makakashō, S. Mahākāshyapa. First Indian Ancestor. (23, 29, 31, 52, 66, 74, 77, 81, 85)

Massan Ryōnen, C. Mo-shan. Master. (10)

Mayoku Hōtetsu, C. Ma-ku Pao-ch'e. Zen Master. (3, 32)

Moggallana, S. Maudgalyayana. Disciple of the Buddha.

Musai Ryōha, C. Wu-chi Liao-p'ai.

Myōshin, C. Miao-hsin. Monk. (10)

Nāgārjuna, J. Nagyaarajuna, C. Lung-shu, Lung-sheng, or Lung-meng. Ancestral Master. (21, 82, 84, 86, 91)

Nangaku Ejō, C. Nan-yüeh Huai-jang. Under Daikan Enō. (7, 19, 22, 26, 60)

Nansen Fugan, C. Nan-ch'üan P'u-yüan. Zen Master. Disciple of Baso. (21, 34, 59, 79)

Ōan Donge, C. Ying-an Tan-hua. Zen Master. (49)

Ōbaku Unshi, C. Huang-po Yün-shih. Zen Master. (21, 27, 29, 50, 73)

Ōryū Enan, C. Huang-lung Hui-nan. Zen Master.

Ōryū Shishin, C. Huang-lung Ssu-hsin.

Reiun Shigon, C. Ling-yün Chih-ch'in. Zen Master. (8)

Rinzai Gigen, C. Lin-ch'i I-hsüan. (10, 21, 24, 25, 29, 32, 50, 51, 82)

Rōya Ekaku, C. Lang-yeh Hui-chüeh. (61)

Ryūge Kodon, C. Lung-ya Chü-tun. Master.

Ryūtan Sōshin, C. Lung-t'an Ch'ung-hsin. Zen Master. (17)

Sanshō Enen, C. San-sheng Hui-jan. Zen Master. (19, 51)

Seidō Chizō, C. Hsi-t'ang Chih-tsang. Zen Master. (75)

Seigen Gyōshi, C. Ch'ing-yüan Hsing-ssu. Zen Master. (11, 15, 23, 31, 51)

Seihō, C. Ch'ing-feng. Zen Master. (1)

Seizan, C. Seizan. (75)

Sekisō Keisho, C. Shih-shuang Ch'ing-chu. Master.

Sekitō Kisen, C. Shih-t'ou Hsi-ch'ien. (11, 23, 27, 28, 51, 62)

Sempuku Jōko, C. Chien-fu Cheng-ku. Zen Master. (74)

Seppō Gison, C. Hsüeh-feng I-ts'un. (4, 19, 22, 29, 31, 35, 38, 45, 49, 60)

Setchō Chikan, C. Hsüeh-tou Chih-chien. Great Master. (52)

Setchō Jūken, C. Hsüeh-tou Chung-hsien. (64, 65, 79)

Shakkyō Ezō, C. Shih-kung Hui-tsang. Zen Master. (75)

Shayata, S. Jayanta. Great Monk. (89)

Shikan, J. Kankei Shikan, C. Kuan-hsi Chih-hsien. Zen Master. (10, 29)

Shinzan Sōmitsu, C. Shen-shan Seng-mi. Zen Master. (41)

Shishibodai, S. Simhabodhi. Great Monk.

Shōju, C. Cheng-shou. (91)

Shōkaku Jōsō, C. Chao-chüeh Ch'ang-tsung. Zen Master. (8)

Shōnawashu, S. Śānavāsa. Third Indian Ancestor.

Shūgetsu, C. Tsung-yüeh. Venerable Master.

Sōgyanandai, S. Sanghananda. Great Monk. (19, 28, 82)

Sōun, C. Sung-yün.

Sōzan Honjaku, C. Ts'ao-shan Pen-chi. (27, 30, 63)

Sozan Kōnin, C. Shu-shan Kuang-jen. Zen Master. (45)

Sunakshatra, C. Zenshō. Disciple of the Buddha who returned to lay life. (82)

Tafuku, C. Ta-fu. One of Jōshū's Dharma heirs.

Taigen Fu, C. Ta-yüan Fu. (57)

Tandō Bunjun, C. Chan-t'ang Wen-chun. Zen Master. (64, 72)

Tanka Shijun, C. Tan-hsia Tzu-ch'un. Great Monk. (64)

Tendō Nyojō, C. T'ien-t'ung Ju-ching. Zen Master. (2, 7, 20, 29, 49, 54, 57, 59, 60, 62, 66, 71, 76, 77)

Tenryū, C. T'ien-lung. Zen Master.

Tō Impō, C. Teng Yin-feng. (79)

Tōba, C. Tung-p'o. Layman in Keisei Sanshoku. (8)

Tokujō, J. Sensu Tokujō, C. Ch'uan-tzu Te-ch'ing. Under Yakusan Igen.

Tokusan Senkan, C. Te-shan Hsüan-chien. Zen Master. Disciple of Sekitō Kisen. (17, 18)

Tokusan Tokkai, C. Te-shan Te-hai. Disciple of Seppō.

Tōsu Daidō, C. T'ou-tzu Ta-t'ung. (43, 54, 63)

Tōsu Gisei, C. T'ou-tzu I-ch'ing. Great Monk. (62)

Tōzan Dōbi, C. Tung-shan Tao-wei.

Tōzan Ryōkai, C. Tung-shan Liang-chieh. (20, 24, 27, 41, 54, 61, 64)

Ubakikuta, S. Upagupta. Great Monk. (82, 91)

Ummon Bun'en, C. Yün-men Wen-yen. (35, 39, 74)

Unchō Tokufū, C. Hsüeh-ting Te-fu. Zen Master.

Ungan Donjō, C. Yün-yen T'an-sheng. (24, 32, 54, 61)

Ungo Dōyō, C. Yün-chu Tao-ying. (20, 27, 52)

Utpalavarna, J. Upparage. (82, 84)

Vasubandhu, J. Bashubanzu.

Vimalakirti, J. Yuima. (31, 70)

Wanshi Shōgaku, C. Hung-chih Cheng-chüeh. A Dharma heir of Tanka Shijun. (26)

Yafu Dōsen, C. Yeh-fu Tao-ch'uan. Zen Master.

Yakusan Igen, C. Yao-shan Wei-yen. Great Master. (11, 20, 26, 28, 70)

Yōka Genkaku, C. Yung-chia Hsüan-chüeh. (88)

Zengen Chūkō, C. Chien-yüan Chung-hsing. Great Master. (45)

About the Translator

After obtaining his doctorate in theatre criticism and the phenomenon of theatre from the University of Washington in 1972, Rev. Hubert Nearman (aka Mark J. Nearman) spent the following decade broadening his knowledge of classical Japanese and Chinese in order to devote himself to making annotated translations of the so-called 'secret tradition' writings (Japanese *hiden*) by Zeami Motokiyo, one of the principal founders of the fourteenth-century Japanese Noh theatre tradition. In 1981, he was awarded a three-year National Endowment for the Humanities grant to make similar annotated translations of treatises by Zeami's son-in-law, Komparu Zenchiku. His translations of these documents on Japanese aesthetics were published in *Monumenta Nipponica*. Also during this period he held faculty positions at the American University (in Washington, DC) and at the University of New South Wales.

In 1988 he was ordained in the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives of the Sōtō Zen tradition by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett and in 1992 received Dharma Transmission from her. Since then, at her request, he has devoted himself to translating major Buddhist works, including Keizan Jōkin's "Record of the Transmission of the Light" (*Denkōroku*) and his "Instructions on How to Do Pure Meditation" (*Zazen Yojin Ki*), as well as "The Scripture of Brahma's Net" (*Bommō Kyō*), the dhārani from "The Scripture on Courageously Going On" (*Shurāôgāma Sutra*), Kanshi Sōsan's "That Which is Engraved upon the Heart That Trusts to the Eternal" (*Hsin Hsin Ming*), Yōka Genkaku's "Song That Attests to the Way" (*Cheng Tao Ko*), "Bodhidharma's Discourse on Pure Meditation" (*Kuan Hsin Lun*), "The Scripture of the Buddha's Last Teachings"(*Yuikyō Gyō*), "The Scripture on Fully Perfected Enlightenment" (*Engaku Kyō*), along with the present work.